





THE CASTILIAN.



# THE CASTILIAN.

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

T. N. TALFOURD.

"He for God only, she for God in him."—MILTON.

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## PREFACE.



THE following Drama is founded on the insurrection of the Commons of Castile against the Regency of the Cardinal Adrian, to whom the Emperor Charles V. committed the government of his Spanish dominions, during his long absence from them in the time occupied by his visits to Germany, England, and Flanders, which followed his acquisition of the imperial crown. The narrative of Robertson, which will be found at the commencement of the Third Book of his "History of Charles V.," appeared to the Author to present some elements of dramatic interest superior to those which the progress and the fate of popular insurrections usually involve. Although the qualities of the leading persons of this movement are but faintly indicated by the historian, he has afforded glimpses

of the character of its leader, Don John de Padilla, which suggest the idea of a soldier deeply imbued with religious faith and devotional feeling—of a leader of rebellion of mind essentially conservative and loyal—which invited an attempt to fill up the outline of his story with circumstances which might, in some degree, reconcile the apparent contradiction between his principles and his actions. The speech imputed to him in his last moments by Robertson, on a fellow-sufferer's expressing indignation on hearing him proclaimed a traitor, "That yesterday was the time to have displayed the spirit of gentlemen; this day to die with the meekness of Christians," and the two letters which, immediately before his execution, he addressed to his wife and to the city of Toledo,\* suggest an example of

\* Both letters will be found in a note of Robertson's History. The following is the letter addressed to the city of Toledo :—

"To thee, the Crown of Spain, and the light of the whole world, free from the time of the mighty Goths; to thee, who by shedding the blood of strangers as well as thy own blood, hast recovered liberty for thy self and thy neighbouring cities, thy legitimate son Juan de Padilla gives information how by the blood of his body thy ancient victories may be refreshed. If fate has not permitted my actions to be placed among your successful and celebrated exploits, the fault hath been in my ill fortune, not in my good will. This I request of thee as a mother to accept, since God hath given me nothing more to



Christian heroism far beyond the ordinary qualities of chivalrous valour—requiring far higher powers than the Author can command to do them justice, but capable, even in a feeble sketch, of exciting an honest sympathy. His story does not want one common element in the history of popular leaders. Like many other great men invoked by the passions of the multitude to heroic action, he was forsaken for a man of higher aristocratic claim and far lower desert—Don Pedro de Giron—and was recalled to the post of danger when it was too late to repair the consequences of the ingratitude of the insurgents, and the indiscretion of their temporary idol.

“The abstract and brief chronicle” of Robertson

leave for thy sake than that which I am now to relinquish. I am more solicitous about thy good opinion than about my own life. The shiftings of Fortune, which never stands still, are many. But this I see, with infinite consolation, that I, the least of thy children, suffer death for thee, and that thou hast nursed at thy breasts such as may take vengeance for my wrongs. Many tongues will relate the manner of my death, of which I am still ignorant, though I know it to be near. My end will testify what was my desire. My soul I recommend to thee, as the patroness of Christianity. Of my body I say nothing, for it is not mine. I can write nothing more—for, at this very moment, I find the knife at my throat, with greater dread of thy displeasure than apprehension of my own pain.”

also suggests the character of a woman, strongly contrasted in some respects with that of the hero, in his wife Donna Maria Pacheco, whose unbounded ambition was refined by an equally unbounded admiration of her husband. The audacity with which, after Padilla's recal to power, when the troops refused to follow him without payment of their arrears, she seized on the treasures of the shrines in the Cathedral of Toledo, with the show of sorrow—(she, with her retinue of ladies “marching to the church in solemn procession, with tears in their eyes, beating their breasts, and falling on their knees to implore the pardon of the saints whose shrines they were about to violate”)—seemed capable of being presented in contrast with the disinterested piety and heroism of Padilla, without any violation of the probability of their true relations, and of exhibiting in some variety the aspects of his more simple character.

But the incident which seemed to the Author most capable of producing an interest less common than that of an ordinary tale of political conspiracy,

is the temporary resuscitation of the melancholy Joanna, the mother of the Emperor, from a state of deplorable insanity, to confer for a short time upon the revolt of the Commons the grace of her title and authority—thus giving the sanction of loyal sentiments to the popular cause. This remarkable incident is thus glanced at by Robertson, after stating the capture of her person at Tordesillas, where she resided in seclusion : “ Padilla “ waited immediately on the Queen, and accosting “ her with that profound respect she exacted from “ the few persons she deigned to admit into her “ presence, acquainted her at large with the miserable condition of her Castilian subjects under the “ government of her son ; who, being destitute of “ experience himself, permitted his foreign ministers to treat them with such rigour as had obliged “ them to take arms in defence of the liberties of “ their country. The Queen, as if she had been “ awakened out of a lethargy, expressed great “ astonishment at what he said, and told him that, “ as she had never heard till that moment of the

“ death of her father, or known the sufferings of  
“ her people, no blame could be imputed to her ;  
“ but that now she would take care to provide a  
“ sufficient remedy ; ‘ and in the meantime,’ added  
“ she, ‘ let it be your concern to do what is neces-  
“ sary for the public welfare.’ Padilla, too eager  
“ in forming a conclusion agreeable to his wishes,  
“ mistook this lucid interval of reason for a perfect  
“ return of that faculty; and acquainting the Junta  
“ with what had happened, advised them to remove  
“ to Tordesillas and hold their meetings at that  
“ place. This was instantly done; but though  
“ Joanna received very graciously an address of the  
“ Junta, beseeching her to take on herself the  
“ government of the kingdom, and in token of her  
“ compliance admitted all the deputies to kiss her  
“ hand; though she was present at a tournament  
“ held on that occasion, and seemed highly satisfied  
“ with both these ceremonies, which were conducted  
“ with great magnificence in order to please her,  
“ she soon relapsed into her former melancholy,  
“ and could never be brought, by argument or

“entreaties, to sign any paper relating to the despatch of business.” The historian records the enthusiastic joy of the Castilians at the restoration of Isabella’s daughter to the throne; the use made by the insurgents of her authority; and the disappearance of this brief apparition of royalty, when, betrayed by Giron’s rashness, the Queen fell into the hands of the Regent, and sunk again into a state of imbecility, from which she never afterwards awoke; leaving the cause of the revolted subjects of Castile destitute of the sanction given for a short time to their arms.

The circumstances by which Joanna was surrounded give an interest to the aberrations of her intellect of a kind somewhat more elevated than usually attends the workings of mental disease. Her noble birth; her ill-fated marriage, preceded by a voyage of unexpected duration and extreme peril; her passionate love of her reckless husband; the solemn recognition by the Cortez at Toledo and Saragossa of her right to succeed the best and greatest of all queens in the crowns of Castile and

Aragon; her renewed sea-peril in company with Philip, when the ship in which she was conveyed was struck by lightning in a tempest and cast on the English shore at Weymouth, after which the expectant sovereigns of Spain were entertained for three months at Windsor by our Henry VII.; her frantic pursuit of her husband to Flanders, and his final desertion of her when she had revenged herself by cutting off the golden locks of his Flemish mistress; her devotion to his corpse, which she kept arrayed in pompous robes, secluded from all eyes but her own, and her conveyance of the body to Grenada by nocturnal journeys for interment; and her long tearless grief; present, in her story, one of the saddest examples of calamity long endured in the midst of the appliances of greatness. They will be found scattered through the pages of one of the most delightful books in the world—Prescott's "History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella"—whence the allusions in the only scene upon which the writer has ventured to introduce this illustrious sufferer are chiefly drawn.

In attempting to weave the main incidents of this episode in the history of Charles V. into the structure of a drama, the Author has been obliged to adapt some of the localities of the events to the necessities of his own limited powers. He has therefore represented the residence of Joanna as at Avila, the original seat of the revolutionary government of the Holy Junta, instead of Tordesillas, to which place they removed at Padilla's suggestion to attend her, and has transferred the scenes of Giron's disastrous command, and of Padilla's last struggle and death, to the neighbourhood of Toledo—the birthplace of both Joanna and Padilla—and has represented those events as immediately connected in time, instead of being separated by a few weeks or possibly months; and in some other respects (as in the death of Giron, who is dismissed to obscurity by Robertson) he has deviated from the chronicle. If it had been his good fortune to possess and consult the work which has made Englishmen familiar with the glories of Spain—which, under the modest guise of a “Hand-

book," is history, statistics, and poetry—the handbook of the student as well as of the traveller—he would have discovered that he was not far from the truth in representing the residence of Padilla in the vicinity of Toledo, but that he should have placed it within the city on a spot left vacant when it had been levelled by Charles V. after the insurrection; but he hopes that his fiction may be reconciled to Mr. Ford's truth, by the supposition that Padilla, besides his house in Toledo, had a villa in the suburbs. He has endeavoured to preserve the essential truth of the story as far as he had the means of ascertaining it, supplying such domestic incidents as seemed to him of not improbable occurrence; and has attained the object of his utmost ambition if he has made some traits of greatness and goodness, which gleam in a piece of history (hitherto, in so far as he is aware, untouched by a dramatist,) palpable to the mind of an indulgent reader.

T. N. T.

*May, 1853.*



## PERSONS REPRESENTED.



### MEN.

THE CARDINAL ADRIAN, *Regent of Castile, under the Emperor Charles V.*

DON OLIVA DE GONZALVO, *a Courtier of Adrian.*

DON PEDRO DE GIRON, *a Castilian Nobleman of the highest rank.*

THE MARQUIS DE VILLENA, *Friend of Giron.*

DON FLOREZ DE CARILLO, *Nephew of Giron.*

DON JOHN DE PADILLA, *a Castilian Nobleman.*

THE MARQUIS DE MONDEIAR, *Brother of Padilla's Wife.*

ALPHONSO, *a Youth, only Son of Padilla.*

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| DON CARLOS DE TENDILLA, | } | <i>Castilian Noblemen, Leaders of the Popular Party in Toledo.</i> |
| DON NICHOLAS DE OVANDO, |   |  |
| DON ALVARO DE GOMEZ,    |   |  |

|                                 |   |                             |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| LOPEZ, <i>an old Servant,</i>   | } | <i>Servants of Padilla.</i> |
| FLORIO, <i>a Domestic Page,</i> |   |                             |

*Members of the Holy Junta, Soldiers, Messengers, &c. &c.*

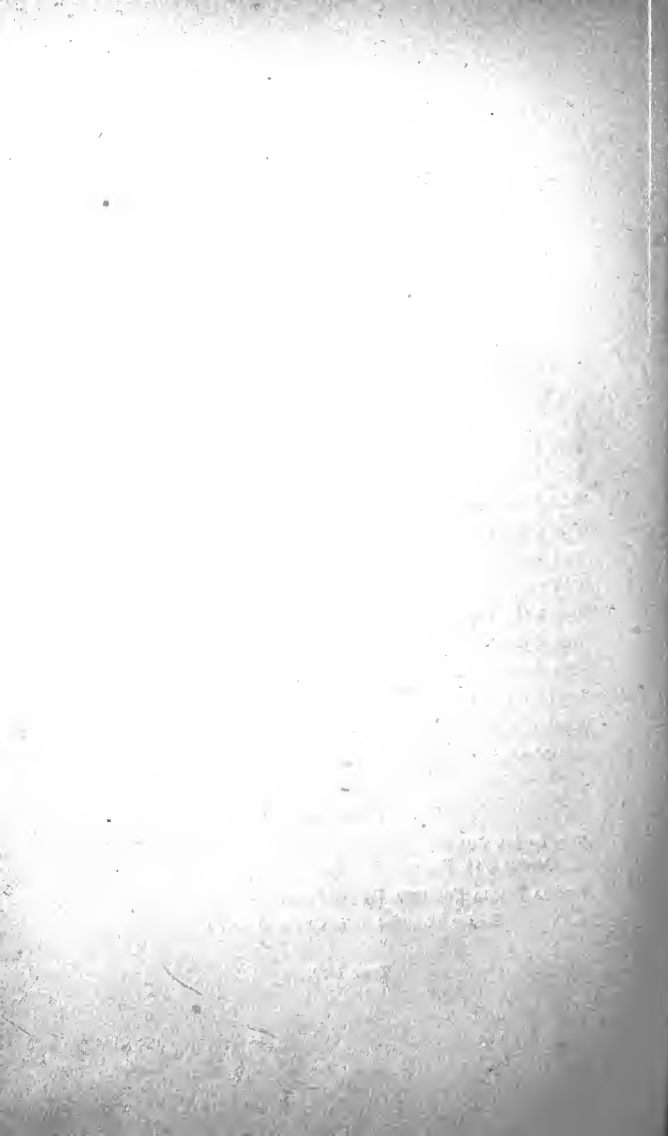
### WOMEN.

THE QUEEN JOANNA, *Daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and Mother of the Emperor.*

DONNA MARIA PACHECO, *Wife of Padilla.*

*Ladies attendant on the QUEEN JOANNA.*

TIME 1522.



## ERRATA.



- Page 38 line 6 for "*flushes*" read "*flashes*."  
,, 48 ,, 10 for "*could*" read "*would*."  
,, 145 ,, 1 instead of "*for*" read "*towards*."  
,, 150 ,, 13 for "*lone-fraught*" read "*home-fraught*."  
,, 185 ,, 12 "*the*" omitted after "*with*."



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## ACT I.

SCENE.—*A Terrace in the Garden of the Mansion of DON JOHN DE PADILLA, in the neighbourhood of Toledo, overlooking the City—in an Alcove, on one side, a Table with covers set for four persons—beyond the City a range of Mountains, through a gorge of which the Tagus flows—approaching Sunset. As the curtain rises, LOPEZ, the old Servant, and FLORIO, a Page, are discovered arranging the Table in the Alcove; they come forward.*

FLORIO.

CAN this be all? Is this the feast to grace  
The birthday of our master's only son—  
And such a son? This simple fare prepared  
Only for four? Well! in my rustic home  
A birthday, even my own, though I am youngest  
Of many peasant children, fill'd our valley  
With mirth till nightfall. I believed the love  
Which doats on young Alphonso would find scope

In such majestic feasting as would win  
Toledo's wonder, and set loose with joy  
The hearts of all our household.

LOPEZ.

Thoughtless child!

And yet I should not blame your careless age,  
That cannot guess the weight of such regard  
As fathers like our master bear their sons,  
Least noted when most prideful; but no lack  
Of feasting will be ours; though, thus apart,  
The parents and their son, without a guest  
Except our lady's brother, who partook  
The first great venture through the western seas,  
And since has lived as restless as the waves  
With which he held long fellowship, will share  
This frugal banquet;—we, in the hall, festoon'd  
With myrtles and full orange boughs, shall drain  
Cups without stint of generous wine, and keep  
The dance alive till midnight.

FLORIO.

Shall all dance?

LOPEZ.

Unless you choose to play the looker-on;



Even I—laugh, if you will—but there are seasons  
When all who truly tasted youth resume it,  
And this is one of mine.

FLORIO.

May a young servant  
Ask, without blame, if always, on this day,  
Our gracious master, who so often holds  
High festival with liberal pomp, contracts  
His wonted state?

LOPEZ.

He has kept this birthday thus,  
Since a fair girl—half of his household's youth—  
Was taken hence. I have heard her parents tell  
How she drew after her such earnest thoughts  
As in this season, which renews their spring-time,  
Make them almost partakers of the home  
Where she awaits them. Lovely child! she bore  
A regal but unhappy name, derived  
From glorious Isabella's mournful heiress,  
And wasted from the world as that great lady  
Shrunk into solitude.

FLORIO.

The Queen Joanna;

She who they say is lunatic?

LOPEZ.

Beware!

Let not your master hear you drop a word  
Which may touch lightly on that sacred grief,  
Unless you'd rouse a hurricane of wrath  
Past all you guess of anger.

FLORIO.

How of wrath—

Our master seems most gentle?

LOPEZ.

So he is,

And most of all indulgent in respects  
That touch himself;—play truant when he needs  
A page's tending most, neglect to bring  
His horse when he is bent on speed, forget  
Half of some urgent message,—if he chide you,  
It will be in a tone so mild, with look  
So like a father's smiling on the excess  
Of a son's heedless mirth, that you shall wait,  
When he has ceased, as wondering the rebuke  
Is past, and almost wishing it prolong'd;  
But let a word or smile betray the lack  
Of duteous reverence for the things he deems  
Holy in earth or heaven, and you shall stand

Shivering before him with lock'd hands, nor dare  
To fly, to kneel, or to withdraw your eyes  
From his, or shape a wish but that the earth  
Would open and enfold you.

Run and help  
To wreath the hall for dancing ;—why you stand  
Aghast, as if in doubt what dancing means :  
What ails you ?

FLORIO.

Nothing but the fear you raise  
Of such an anger.

LOPEZ.

Then be light of heart ;  
Only continue guileless and obedient  
As I believe you are, and you will live here  
In toils as light, and gallant sports as free,  
As you were born thrice noble. Trip away.

[Exit FLORIO.

The sun declines ; what can detain my master ?

*Enter the* MARQUIS DE MONDEIAR.

MONDEIAR.

What ! Vegetating still with ruddy cheek  
As twenty summers since—like yonder dial  
O'er-grown by the huge sycamore, that, touch'd

No longer by the sunbeam, shows no trace  
Of coursing time? My sister comes; go in,  
And bid the house be merry.

LOPEZ.

Peace be with you.

[*Exit LOPEZ.*]

MONDEIAR.

I will not say Amen to prayers for peace—  
Let all break now!

*Enter DONNA MARIA DE PACHECHO.*

MONDEIAR.

The blessings of the day  
Surround you, sister! But I look in vain  
For its young hero and his sire; 'tis graceless  
To own impatience in a time so happy,  
But eager thoughts forestall the approaching night,  
Which must not veil us without one hour spent  
With those I soon may part from.

MARIA.

Eager thoughts—

A threat of parting!—Are you tamed at last,  
Subdued to beg from some fair conqueror  
One little evening hour for older loves?

So speeds a new-born tyranny! Dear brother,  
Whose absolute beauty rules your time?

MONDEIAR.

Forbear!

There is a sterner and a nobler mistress  
Than one of mortal loveliness that rules  
My anxious moments now: but what impedes  
Padilla and Alphonso? I must quaff  
One ancient round of healths, or my next year  
Will roll unblest'd.

MARIA (*pointing*).

Do you discern a thread  
Of white against the sky, that glistens touch'd  
By the last sunbeams, while the shelving crags,  
That open to disclose it, lie in shade?  
Our boy, who knows it as the loftiest peak  
Our region boasts, won from his father promise  
That, on this birthday, he should make the trial  
To reach its summit; before dawn they started,  
And have not yet return'd; the way is long—  
Across the city——

MONDEIAR.

True; across the city—  
They may have been detain'd—across the city?

MARIA.

What then? There's not a heart within its walls,  
From that which is most quick with generous  
promptings,  
To vilest outcast's that retains one pulse  
Of good not wholly numb'd, that would not break  
To serve Padilla; no—I cannot fear  
Aught in Toledo.

MONDEIAR.

I spoke not of danger.

Hark! Is there not a rush—a shout—a murmur?

MARIA.

What is it that you fear?

MONDEIAR.

Fear? Lest the crowds  
That throng the streets, with too impatient love,  
May stay his passage, and before the time  
Speak their desire. You smile, as if your heart,  
Your high and towering heart, foreknew and hail'd  
My news unspoken. 'Neath yon glistening roofs  
Huge thoughts and towering passions wait the hour  
When they shall rend and scatter to the winds  
The feeble bonds that curb them. Blistering shame

For nation, mighty as Castile, transferr'd  
By a slight youth to alien rule, and scorn  
Of his ignoble instruments, have wing'd  
A people's strong conviction, which a day,  
An hour, may see triumphant. Hark! There's life  
In yonder streets.

MARIA.

Go on—there is no sound—  
Speak on.

MONDEIAR.

No sound? It may be so, for silence  
In its depth speaks; of late the healthy breath  
Of daily life has stopp'd; the workman casts  
His tools in restless languor down, and joins  
Some cluster'd troop of idlers in the sun,  
Who seek no pastime, but seem met to gaze  
With wonder on each other; each surveys  
The face of each, as if he read strange thoughts,  
And yet they only speak of common things,  
And that in hurried whispers; children stand  
Perplex'd amid their toys: while mothers cleave,  
With arms grown rigid, to their husbands' breasts  
And eyes upturn'd, as if they strove for words  
To ask the meaning of the nameless fear

That creeps along their heartstrings ; but that silence  
Shall break ; one war-cry from a leader's lips  
Will change it into thunder ; but, alas !  
The people want a leader.

MARIA.

You shall lead them.

MONDEIAR.

Not I, Maria ; I can strike and bleed,  
But own no power of sympathy which moulds  
The passions of a mighty nation roused  
For noblest issues. 'Tis not grace to wear  
A life as lightly as a festal plume  
For fortune's breeze to trifle with, and turn  
A panic-stricken legion by exploit  
Of desperate valour, that endows a chief  
For strife like ours : no ; he who would direct  
A people in its rising, must be calm  
As death is, yet respond to every pulse  
Of passion'd millions,—as yon slender moon  
That scarce commends the modest light it sheds  
Through sunset's glory to the gazer's sense,  
In all its changes, in eclipse, in storm,  
Enthroned in azure, or enriching clouds



That, in their wildest hurry, catch its softness,  
Will sway the impulsive ocean, he must rule  
By strength allied to weakness, yet supreme,  
Man's heaving soul, and bid it ebb and flow  
In sorrow, passion, glory, as he mourns,  
Struggles, or triumphs.

MARIA.

You intend my husband?

MONDEIAR.

Yes. Will you urge him to his glorious work?  
Let me unfold our cause.

MARIA.

Your cause! I seek  
No knowledge of your cause, a thing of words;  
It is the MAN whose nature God arrays  
In semblance of His greatness that inflames  
And stamps the cause. Padilla was not born  
That an adoring household should surmise  
The might his goodness veils; let *him* command,  
Conquer, and govern, and the cause of earth  
And heaven shall triumph in his reign.

MONDEIAR.

It shall!

I hear his footstep ; we must break all gently  
If we would see him leader.

MARIA.

I *shall* see him ;  
The hour is come : lie still my bounding heart ;  
The hour is come.

*[Enter PADILLA and ALPHONSO, followed by FLORIO. PADILLA unbuckles his sword-belt, and gives his sword to FLORIO, who goes out with it.]*

PADILLA.

Accuse us not as loiterers ;  
We made our horses fly, till this gay horseman,  
Who loves them, I believe, almost as well  
As he loves us, cried shame upon our speed :  
Yet sunset chides us.

MONDEIAR.

Was your way delay'd  
By concourse in Toledo ?

PADILLA.

No ; its streets  
Were strangely void, as if its men had fled  
From portents of a hurricane ; the fault  
Lay in my judgment that too lightly scann'd  
The distance of the pinnacle we sought

And found entrench'd amidst the hills it crowns  
By rock-cleft gorges ; yet 'twas full reward  
For painful struggles through the granite wilds  
To watch my brave companion, as with step  
Airy and true, he scaled the pillar'd top  
With head erect, while crumbling fragments broke  
To dust beneath each footstep, till he trod  
The glassy summit, never touch'd till then  
Save by the bolt that splinter'd it, serene  
As if a wing, too fine for mortal sight,  
Upbore him, while slant sunbeams graced his brow  
With diadem of light.

MONDEIAR.

So may he stand  
Irradiate, when the crown of old Castile  
Shall wreath that brow !

PADILLA.

The crown of old Castile !—  
The glorious realm of which he is the child—  
The realm for which, although no oath has yet  
Laid weight upon his boyhood, all his veins  
Would proudly pour their blood ! Forbid such thought  
Wing'd by the demon of a dream should break  
Through his light slumber ! What is it distracts you ?

MARIA.

'Twas but a harmless birthday wish, which love  
Shaped in delighted sportiveness, and love  
Alone has listen'd to.

PADILLA.

A harmless wish!

And this from you, Maria! Were he born  
To tread the lowliest course of peasant life  
It were a false affection to desire  
His fever'd struggle and his loftier fortune,  
Instead of calm endeavour to adorn  
The rank assign'd him by his God, with grace  
That brave obedience nurtures; but for *him*—  
Born a Castilian nobleman in faith  
Unvex'd by doubt, to duties which are bright  
With glorious requisitions and rewards,  
What can be wish'd, but that he live and die  
Worthy his lot, not raised in hope above  
Nor sunk in deed beneath it? Yet you wish  
For such a youth a crown he cannot wear  
But by the base success of treason! Brother,  
Rather than this fair nurseling of Castile  
Should grasp her crown, I'd see him bend his head  
In meek submission to her sword upraised

To slay him falsely doom'd. Great Heaven ! he's pale :  
A blackness trembles on his face—'tis gone—  
What ails you, my Alphonso ? Did my words  
Sicken your heart with images of death ?  
Think them most idle.

ALPHONSO.

No ; I felt not sickness ;  
Strange were it, if one school'd as I have been,  
Should quail at thoughts of death, and stranger still  
When you awake them.

PADILLA.

Pale again ! some grief  
Is struggling through the veil that wraps our Present,  
In portents—Heaven avert it from the brow  
Of youth, to strike the elder ! But this birth-night  
Was meant for joy ; whate'er the future bears,  
Let gratitude fill this.

*[They turn to the Alcove, and begin to take their places  
at the table.]*

*Enter* LOPEZ.

LOPEZ.

A royal officer,  
Who gives his name Gonsalvo, craves a word  
With you alone.

PADILLA.

Gonsalvo—can it be  
The same with whom I shared a page's schooling  
When the great Marquis of Cadiz allow'd us  
His household's discipline? Another time  
Right gladly had I welcomed him—but now—  
Comes he alone?

LOPEZ.

A band of soldiers, rude  
Of speech, attend him; they have piled their swords  
And helmets in the court, as if they thought  
To sojourn with us.

PADILLA.

Give them food and wine,  
And lead Gonsalvo hither.

[Exit LOPEZ.]

If he stands  
As I have heard, high in the Regent's favour,  
He is too prosperous to waste time on me,  
And soon will leave us to piece out the joy  
Of this chance-ravell'd hour.

MONDEJAR.

Meanwhile I'll find  
Due welcome for your martial guests.

[*Aside to MARIA.* Thank Heaven

Toledo's ready for them.

[*Aloud.*

Sister, come,

We shall find work within.

PADILLA.

You'll find the feast

Spread for our household in the hall; be sure

The soldiers are made welcome.

[*Exeunt MONDEIAR, MARIA, and ALPHONSO.*

PADILLA (*alone*).

Here's their officer—

How alter'd from the bright and wayward boy  
With whom I often wrestled, sometimes fought,  
And, though not earnest in affection, liked  
The better for our conflicts. Shall I seem  
As changed to him?

*Enter GONSALVO.*

PADILLA.

Old playmate, you are welcome;  
You come upon the birthday of my son,  
Who on this day attains the happy age  
At which we parted. You must drain one goblet

Before you say that anything more urgent  
Than memory of old times has brought you to us.

GONSALVO.

No feasting—I am come on sterner business ;  
I bear commission to unveil and crush  
Foul treasons in your city.

PADILLA.

In Toledo ?

Be jocund, then ; you'll find no painful duties ;  
There are not truer spirits in Castile  
Than glow within yon walls.

GONSALVO.

You think them loyal !

I must admire your unsuspecting goodness  
Rather than praise your wisdom. Is your ear  
So charm'd, that not a murmur from the craftsmen  
Has startled it ? Nay, is your sainted sleep  
So curtain'd by oblivion, that no echo  
Has wafted through its labyrinth of dreams  
A whisper of sedition ?

PADILLA.

Not a breath



From a disloyal fantasy has stirr'd  
Life's placid air around us.

GONSALVO.

Strange as true.

But, if you *can*,—suppose the crowd you praise  
As loyal in Toledo, should presume  
To mutter low complaints that Charles bestows  
His presence on a foreign court, or doubt  
His right to choose the Regent of his realms  
Save from Castilian blood,—what would you tell them ?

PADILLA.

Bid them resume the duties God has laid  
On tranquil lowliness, and leave to Him  
By whom kings reign the power to judge of kings  
Who at His bar shall answer.

GONSALVO.

Bravely said.

But, further ; what if they should heave with thoughts  
That, born in rugged commonwealths of old,  
Have started from the sceptred sleep of years  
To shake our monarchies ? Should dream of power  
To raise a bar in every peasant's soul  
At which the rulers of the earth shall stand

Arraign'd ; nay, chafing at the sacred curb  
Of priestly guidance, claim to choose a creed  
And fashion faith at pleasure ? Do you live  
While Luther's words, with lightning flash, assail  
The majesties of Rome, and hear no clang  
Of intellect's rebellion, ghastlier far  
Than that of armies ?

PADILLA.

I have heard reports  
Of heresies, but never wasted time  
To question them ; my days are short enough  
By light of cloudless faith to do the work  
Which simple duty points ; I ask no space  
For my soul's venture but the path that lies  
Direct 'twixt me and Heaven ; enough for me  
To soar from earth along that narrow track  
Which angel-gleamings border : to my God  
Devotion—to my King obedience—these  
Are simple words that breathe of mighty things  
Sufficient to endow for life and death  
A Christian soldier's being.

GONSALVO.

It were well  
Your friends could hear you talk thus.

PADILLA.

Talk! what mean you?

You urge me to this service of the tongue  
And then you scoff at what my nature loathes  
As much as you despise it! Why are you here  
To show me for a braggard of the faith  
Which every noble of Castile enshrines  
In heart as true as mine? You smile—great Heaven!  
Is my truth doubted? Are you sent to call  
My life a lie? Speak not, but take it!

GONSALVO.

No;

The Regent, in his clemency, forbears  
To claim your life, although your vaunted friends,  
Ripe in Toledo for revolt, avow  
Full confidence that brave Padilla's name  
Will varnish their rebellion. Adrian seeks  
No more of treason's idol than your cession  
Prisoner to me; and, for the present, doom'd  
To no worse dungeon than this fair domain,  
Where you may breathe your loyalty in prayers  
For us, whose falchions shall destroy the webs  
Of treachery you perceive not.

PADILLA.

Who has wrought this ?

Where lurks the caitiff who has forged the lie  
That, by the being of a moment, taints  
My fame for ever ? I have done no wrong  
With consciousness to mortal—let me know  
His name, Gonsalvo ! I will work no harm  
On the poor slave, but look into his eyes  
And bid him gaze on mine, as now I stand  
Confronting you : ha ! I perceive your flesh  
Where the soul's palsy creeps in every line  
That trembles with its separate cowardice  
Confessing that the falsehood you unfold  
Is your own fabric,—for some paltry gaud,  
An office, or a title, or a smile,  
You have spread your poisons on an honest life  
Whose youth your boyhood mated ;—come ! be bold !  
Avow it ! Speak ! I wear no sword to guard  
The bosom you have rack'd—I cannot stab  
The slander at your heartstrings !

GONSALVO.

You remind me  
That 'tis my duty to demand your sword,

In token that you hold yourself a prisoner  
At the Imperial order.

PADILLA.

At the Emperor's ?  
Has Charles's warrant authorised this shame ?

GONSALVO (*showing a parchment*).

You know his hand ?

PADILLA (*glancing at it and giving it back*).

'Tis true—break heart—end all—  
Within there !

[*Calling.*

*Enter* ALPHONSO.

PADILLA.

No—not you—bid Lopez come—  
And bring my sword.

ALPHONSO.

To-night, sir ?

PADILLA.

Yes—at once—  
Why do you gaze upon me ? Go, my boy.

[*Exit* ALPHONSO.

GONSALVO.

A gallant youth ; is he your son ?

PADILLA.

Bear with me ;

I am stricken in a moment, and should learn  
Acquaintance with the griefs debasement spreads  
On all around it ; and my son must share them ;  
But I am not arm'd, as yet, to bid him look  
On the enforced surrender of that sword  
Which I have hoped that he would bear undimm'd  
Beside my bier, and after use it nobly  
For Charles, who now by you demands it ; soon—  
Full soon—my boy must feel the home he honors,  
A shameful prison.

GONSALVO.

No ; a brighter lot

Shall wait him than to pace a captive's halls :  
He shall depart with me.

PADILLA.

With you ?

GONSALVO.

With me—

A priceless hostage for his father's faith,  
Train'd in the camp by martial discipline  
To loyalty as firm as yours will show for  
While he is with me.

PADILLA.

In the camp? Your camp?

My child—whose opening spirit scarce retains  
A stain upon the purity it drew  
From heaven, when chrysome at the font—whence dust  
Of earth's pollutions, by the faintest breath  
Of love's rebuke unsettled, flit in air,  
And leave it all the angel? Must he learn  
The lessons of your guard-room? Never! Take  
His innocent life, and with it the two lives  
That are sustain'd by his—or, if that grace  
Exceed your mission, find some loathsome cell—  
A narrow cell—there are but three of us—  
Where we may waste together;—speak, and bless me!

GONSALVO.

The youth shall go with me.

PADILLA.

Wake not the spirit  
Your warrant crush'd, to frenzy. You and I,  
Who meet thus strangely on life's downward verge,  
With hair just whitening, parted in the prime  
Of boyhood—joyous, yet not graced as that  
You would make wretched—and though anxious years

Have since revolved, the memories of our pastimes  
Have broken on me through their mists—do you  
Forget them utterly?—or sterner hours  
When I have borne the meed your frolics drew  
Without a murmur? By those old records  
Of sweet and sad companionship—spare this,  
And take all else!

GONSALVO.

Show me a course as sure  
To keep the loyalty you vaunt unbroken!  
'Twas well imagined—bid your son prepare—  
The light is waning.

PADILLA (*pacing the stage in great agitation*).

Heaven in grace look down!  
I cannot answer him—the air is heavy—  
The ponderous storm-clouds fall and hem me in  
With canopy of brass—break—break above me—  
And let me breathe again! They part—God's sky  
In deepest azure opens to my soul,  
And bids it thus defy thee!

GONSALVO.

Traitor!



*Enter MARIA, MONDEIAR, and ALPHONSO, followed by LOPEZ with PADILLA'S sword. PADILLA sinks on a bench at the back of the scene, and covers his face with his hands.*

MARIA (to GONSALVO).

What is this ?

What sad news have you brought us ?

PADILLA.

You are come

To hear this minion of the Regent charge  
Your husband with sedition—ask his sword—  
And, for the hostage of his tainted honour,  
Demand his precious child.

MARIA.

You do not grant them ?  
Speak, speak ! You will not yield !

PADILLA.

Never our darling ;  
All else the Emperor shall command.

GONSALVO.

A force

Sufficient to compel you to obey  
My great commission waits ; if you withhold  
The hostage, I shall call my ready soldiers,  
Who will enforce your duty.

MONDEIAR.

Call them—call them !

They'll scarcely answer you : surprised, they strive  
To burst the mansion's gates, which, while they feasted,  
My friends, who guess'd a shameful purpose, barr'd.

PADILLA.

My Sovereign's troops imprison'd in my halls—  
Of lie too soon made true !

[To GONSALVO.]

Withdraw in time—

I'll bid your soldiers follow.

MONDEIAR.

Let them go ;

They can work little harm without the weapons  
I've taken charge of.

PADILLA.

Give them back.

MARIA.

Arm soldiers

To rend our darling from us ?

ALPHONSO (*kneeling to PADILLA, who remains seated*).

Let me die

Rather than rive your loyal nature thus,  
But not in life be parted from you.

PADILLA (*placing his hands on ALPHONSO's head, and bending over it*).

Never ;—

The tyrant shall not dash away the bloom  
That innocence spreads here ; nor fill these eyes  
With bitter tears ; nor bid them glare with fire  
That desperate pleasure lights ; nor teach these lips  
To utter thoughts unholy.

[*Rising and addressing GONSALVO.*

Villain, leave us,  
Before the passion climbing in my soul  
Endow these hands with fury to avenge  
The home your presence violates !

GONSALVO.

Farewell—

Your loyalty's right well assured—to-morrow  
Expect me with a band, too strong for rifling,  
To vindicate your king.

[*Exit GONSALVO.*

MARIA.

You ask'd your sword—  
'Tis here ; you'll find its use.

[*PADILLA takes the sword from LOPEZ, who goes out.*

PADILLA.

I welcome thee !

And thus unsheath thee in the just defence  
Of this dear household.

MONDEIAR.

And shall feebler households  
Want its protection ?

PADILLA.

They are not profaned  
By wrongs like ours.

MONDEIAR.

With insults great as this  
Castile's poor homes are visited ; the iron  
Delay'd till now acquaintance with your soul :  
But it has enter'd thousands of brave natures  
E'er it pierced yours.

PADILLA.

Do multitudes endure  
Beneath the Regent's sway such wrongs as this ?  
Am I by some foul dream beset, or roused  
From deep oblivion of my country's griefs  
To meet them naked ? Agonies and shames,

That crouch'd beneath mild semblances of law,  
Start up, and chide me for the fond belief  
I have cherish'd too supinely while I dream'd  
That I perform'd man's duty. A new world  
Of strange oppressions startles me, as shapes  
Of dim humanity, that clustering hung  
Along the dusky ridges of the West,  
Struck Spain's great Admiral with awe of natures  
From Time's beginning passion'd with desires  
He had no line to fathom.

*[Shouts and tumult without.]*

*Enter TENDILLA, OVANDO, GOMEZ, and others.*

TENDILLA.

Mondeiar, we wait you ;

The people are in arms ; a swift report  
Of outrage to their noblest townsman wing'd  
Their discontents with rage that would not brook  
An hour's restraint : they come ; they shout his  
name.

*[Nearer shouts, in which the name of PADILLA is mingled.]*

PADILLA.

Roused, said you, by my wrongs, while I stand thus  
Unheeding theirs ?

*[Shouts still nearer.]*

MARIA (*to PADILLA*).

You hear that call?

PADILLA.

I hear,

And fly to answer it—for home! For justice!

[PADILLA *rushes out, followed by* TENDILLA, OVANDO,  
*and others.*

MONDEIAR (*following them*).

We triumph, sister! Let your prayers ascend  
For blessings on our cause!

MARIA.

On him! on him!

[*Exeunt severally.*

## ACT II.

One night is supposed to elapse between the First and Second Acts.





## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An eminence near the great Gate of Toledo, overlooking the city and the valley of the Tagus. MONDEIAR discovered pacing the ground impatiently.*

MONDEIAR.

No voice ! no step ! This spot Padilla named  
When to each chief he gave his midnight charge  
For daybreak meeting ; and the jagged urn  
Of dawn, which yon divided peaks embrace,  
Is full of saffron, which bespeaks the sun  
Just raised on level ocean ; yet the air  
Is silent, and Toledo lies entranced  
As weary of brave sports. I know we triumph,  
Though my dull office lay without the walls,  
For the long shouts of joy that pierced the skies  
Were mingled with no discords.

The low hills

Have caught the sunbeams ; still I gaze alone.  
Since those age-freighted hours in which I shared

Columbus' watch upon the dismal sea,  
While the low murmurs of despair were hush'd  
To dull submission by the solemn light  
Of the great Captain's eye, as from the helm  
It beam'd composure, till the world we sought  
Dawn'd in its flushes ere the headland broke  
The gloom to common vision,—I have felt  
No vacant time so heavy as these moments  
Which should be throng'd with actions.

*Enter TENDILLA.*

TENDILLA.

Am I right ?

Is this our place of gathering ?

MONDEIAR.

Right—your news—

Why does the glorious madness of the night  
Lie hush'd in this deep silence ?

TENDILLA.

Freedom pants

Amazed at victory. My duty lay  
Sometimes beside our chief, whose sabre's flash  
Along the streets gave signal to men's souls  
Ready to leap from serfdom ; every house

Started from darkness into festal lights  
As touch'd by magic finger ; bells rang forth  
In sudden peals ; and three triumphant words,  
Padilla—Liberty—Castile—o'er all  
The glorious clamours floated.

MONDEIAR.

The Alcazar ?

TENDILLA.

Giron, who comes, will tell us ; 'twas his charge  
To summon it on one side, while Padilla  
Assail'd it on the other.

*Enter* DON PEDRO DE GIRON.

MONDEIAR.

Welcome ! Tell us  
How sped your enterprise.

GIRON.

'Twas none ; my boast  
Is that I bore the rabble's breath and live.  
The throng I should have led, swept me enthrall'd  
In rude embrace ; till, struggling to their front,  
I stood before the drawbridge, which upraised  
Left the trench yawning ;—then my rabble paused,

While soldiers, roused from slumber, mann'd the walls  
And with join'd sabres, fashioning sheets of steel,  
Defied my dusky forest waving grim  
With axe and bludgeon ; as I gave the word  
For action, from within the fortress rose  
A frantic yell of triumph, which proclaim'd  
Our work achieved ; the soldiers dropp'd their swords,  
And stretch'd their arms impatient to embrace  
Their rugged foes : the drawbridge fell ; the craftsmen  
In headlong rapture swept across to join  
Padilla's band ; while from the central tower  
The long-furl'd banner of Castile flew out  
Among the stars ; one voice exclaim'd, " Thank God !"  
And at the words, the motley hosts kneel'd down  
Like docile children at their mother's call,  
And cross'd their arms in silence. But here comes  
The idol who enchants them, heralded  
Even to our meeting by their clamours.

[*Shouts.*]*Enter PADILLA.*

PADILLA,

Welcome !

Beneath the unclouded dome of heaven give thanks  
For last night's stainless conquest ; if my sword  
Had not chastised a stripling who mistook

The time for one of license, 'twere undimm'd  
By drop of crimson. Who should now complete  
Our roll of leaders?

GIRON.

I have friends to name,  
Guzman, Villena—

PADILLA.

Villena! must we own  
That wreckless gamester?

GIRON.

If his personal life  
Is chequer'd with light follies, 'tis derived  
From fountains ancient and august as fill  
Castilian veins.

PADILLA.

So bears a shame more flagrant  
Than his whose frailties, urged by needs, defile  
A lowlier spring of being. In Castile,  
The glory that ancestral ages wreath  
Around a noble's brow is less his own  
Than portion of the lustre that arrays  
His country; and the baseness that obscures it  
Combines foul treason to the sacred dead  
With robbery of the living.

GIRON.

Dare you charge  
My friend with baseness !

PADILLA.

Yes ; what meaner vice  
Crawls there than that which no affections urge,  
And no delights refine ; which from the soul  
Steals mounting impulses which might inspire  
Its noblest ventures, for the arid quest  
Of wealth 'mid ruin ; changes enterprise  
To squalid greediness, makes heaven-born hope  
A shivering fever, and, in vile collapse,  
Leaves the exhausted heart without one fibre  
Impell'd by generous passion ? And your friend,  
Weary of cards and dice, would make our wrongs  
The counters of his game ! We'll none of him !

MONDEIAR.

Brother, be wise ; in such a state as ours,  
We must not judge thus nicely—Giron's friend  
Must find allowance.

PADILLA.

Is it so ? Alas !

Who else ?

TENDILLA.

I name Ovando—Gomez——

PADILLA.

Brawlers, who without touch of true regard  
For men of bitter needs, inflame their thoughts  
By falsehood ; and, for succour, give them hate,  
The soul's worst poison.

GIRON.

So I think of them ;  
But we must work with various instruments,  
Or perish.

PADILLA.

O great Heaven ! I thought our cause  
Strong in its justice.

MONDEIAR.

So it is, my brother ;  
And while a nation's passion sweeps its depths  
May bear these surface eddies ; as the sheet  
Of yon broad river, by light breezes touch'd,  
Breaks into devious ripples as of streams  
Slanting for various destinies, yet keeps  
Its single course—so while a cause like ours,  
Moved by a people's righteous fury, pours  
Right onward, these obliquities are lost

In the great current, if we let them skim it,  
Nor break its force to check them. Villena comes ;  
Pray welcome him.

*Enter the MARQUIS DE VILLENA.*

VILLENA (*offering his hand to PADILLA*).

Let me embrace our chief.

PADILLA (*shudders, but gives his hand*).

Your hand. Who follows next ?

GIRON.

My nephew seeks

Service and honour with us.

*Enter CARILLO with his arm bandaged.*

PADILLA.

Ha ! he has won

A scratch already ; would it were achieved

In honour ! Do I see the officer

Who felt my sword last night ?

CARILLO.

You see him bow

Repentant to your censure.

PADILLA.

Your offence



In council must be judged ; till that is past,  
Resign your sword and hold yourself a prisoner.

GIRON.

My kinsman welcomed thus !

PADILLA.

If he had sprung  
From the noblest blood of earth, he should be judged  
And sentenced as the meanest. He has stain'd  
A righteous enterprise which, else, had worn  
No spot. Amid the tumult of the night  
One cry of agony alone was heard,  
And 'twas a woman's, who, from rude embrace,  
Shriek'd for protection ; happily I was near,  
Or the most holy outcry of the earth  
Had been unanswer'd.

CARILLO.

Let me hear my sentence  
At once, from one whose words by justice shaped  
Bow me with shame.

PADILLA.

Serve in the ranks six months.

GIRON (to CARILLO).

Do not endure it.

CARILLO.

Uncle, let me serve,  
And by my prompt obedience win again  
The rank I had forgotten.

[To PADILLA.

Sir, assign me  
A common soldier's trust.

PADILLA.

Relieve the guard  
At yonder city gate.

[Exit CARILLO.

PADILLA (*to GIRON*).

You think me stern,  
But you will one day thank me.

GIRON.

I shall thank you  
In fitting season.

MONDEIAR (*interposing*).

Part we now to meet  
An hour hence at the council-house, and shape  
Our onward course.

GIRON.

Agreed.

[*Exeunt all but PADILLA and MONDEIAR.*

MONDEIAR.

You have made a foe  
Potent and deadly.

PADILLA.

I am glad to know it ;  
His friendship had been worse than deadly—shameful.

MONDEIAR.

I thought you were more constant in your temper—  
You are chafed now.

PADILLA.

I will subdue this fault  
By gazing for a moment on the home,  
Whence the sweet breath of old familiar joys  
Henceforth will rarely soothe me.

MONDEIAR.

'Twill unnerve you  
For our stern duties.

PADILLA.

No ; 'twill nurture in me  
That mighty sense of wrong which only grows  
From lovely things insulted. Pray you say  
That I am coming.

[Exit MONDEIAR.]

PADILLA (*alone*).

I must gather strength  
To quell these swellings of indignant nature  
Among those mighty images which make  
A desperate venture calm. Loveliest of vales,  
Spread now before my gaze in childhood's light,  
Speak to me with the echoes which your rocks  
Have treasured from vow'd striplings' martial steps,  
While they bade frank adieu to sports and hopes  
And meditated forms which death could wear  
In our great Christian strife, as thoughts of lovers  
Dally with shapes of joy ! Castilian banners,  
That flutter'd in my life's remotest dawn,  
And made my childish fancy leap to valour,  
Wave with such solemn grandeur as shall sweep  
All meaner angers to augment one rage  
August against the alien rule which blasts  
The land you glorify ! Let all delights  
Of home, which sense of loyal faith made sweeter,  
Lend their selectest symbols to oppose  
The power which bids them wither at its grasp,  
Or sparing makes them slavish,—and invest  
My soul as with a breastplate ! I am arm'd.

[*Exit* PADILLA.]

SCENE II.—*The Terrace in PADILLA's garden, as in 1st Act.*  
—*Shouts heard at intervals, growing nearer.*

*Enter DONNA MARIA.*

MARIA.

Shout on! Roar on! My spirit drinks the crash  
Of furious discords blent in one great hope,  
As I have listen'd to the mighty cataract,  
From which the sounds of jagged channels join  
In one majestic thunder that descends  
With the same single music on the ear  
As at the river's conquest o'er its rocks  
When first it made its passage. Roar, and speak  
The strong outbursting of a nation's soul  
At its true master's call! Is none awake  
In whom the lonely rapture of my night  
May find an echo? I will call my son—  
Alphonso! Can he sleep?

*Enter LOPEZ.*

MARIA.

Where's your young master?

LOPEZ.

Alas ! I know not ; as, last night, with me  
He paced our loftiest crags, a wilder cry  
Than any which our earnest ears had caught,  
Rose from the city ;—when, without a word,  
He sprang from the sharp margin of the rock  
Like bird in air ; scarce touch'd the points that aid  
The painful climber ; swam the stream which gave  
A gurgle's notice of his buoyant course ;  
Leap'd to the meadow ; waved his plume and flew  
Into the darkness.

MARIA.

Bravely done ; his place  
Is at his father's side. The shouts draw nearer ;  
Can you not catch one name above them all ?

*Enter* ALPHONSO.

MARIA.

Where have you left Padilla ?

ALPHONSO.

Left him ! mother,  
I have sought him through the night, and cried in vain  
To crowds that circled him to give me way,  
Though I was near him often ; now they rush,

Led by the noblest in Toledo, hither,  
And, as I think, to crown him.

MARIA.

Heaven assuage

The transports of my soul, that I may meet  
This fortune as befits his wife ! I'll sit  
And study to be marble.

[Sits.

*Enter DON VELASCO, Prefect of Toledo, with Soldiers  
and Citizens.*

VELASCO.

Noble lady,

We seek Padilla.

MARIA.

Here ! Then danger's past,  
Else ye would not expect him in a home  
Which only knows its thunders.

VELASCO.

It is past ;

Toledo's free ; and her delighted citizens  
Would hail you as a queen.

MARIA.

Me ! Do not waste

A moment of this time in wreathing honors

For a frail woman, who has only grace  
As she adores the mighty. My sole claim  
Is, that I have loved Padilla from his bloom  
Of glorious youth, not as a love-sick maid  
Entranced to watch the shadow of a curl  
On man's bright forehead, in the swimming depths  
Of hazel eyes with fondness downward bent  
Reads her own charms reflected ; 'twas his soul,  
His kingly nature, that I honor'd then  
And worship now ; if ye shall crown Padilla,  
Ye will do wisely. But my brother comes—  
And, after him, my husband.

*Enter MONDEIAR—after him PADILLA.*

MARIA.

My dear lord,  
You have return'd in happiest time to give  
Your gracious answer to Toledo's prayers,  
Which claim you for a sovereign, whom Castile  
Will soon confirm her own.

PADILLA.

Me?

VELASCO.

Our shouts sent up



From our full hearts shall answer. He whose name,  
As by enchantment, shook our fetters from us,  
Alone shall rule us.

PADILLA.

Do you speak the wish  
Of all the citizens ?

VELASCO.

All—save some base ones  
Who seek their own advancement.

PADILLA.

Is it so ?

Is what I welcomed as a noble voice,  
Sent from a people's spirit to its King's  
To wake his justice, treason ? Do I stand here  
A chief of rebels ? No, my countrymen,  
Your error's but a moment's extasy,  
Which Heaven will pardon.

MONDEIAR.

But will Charles forgive ?  
Does loyalty deceive you with the hope  
That he whose nature when it verged on manhood  
Was old in craftiest policy's success  
Will pardon this revolt—start not—such name

Our acts must carry—or forgive the love  
With which the people urge you to protect  
Yourself with them ?

PADILLA.

It may be true, I am blasted ;  
It may be, that in rising to redress  
Great wrongs, we have snapp'd the holy bond of  
subjects ;  
But I will bear all shames before the spoil  
Of such disaster sink with meaner guilt  
The rebel to the robber.

MARIA.

Husband ! lord !  
Before you fling the proffer'd sceptre from you  
Think of the strifes its sway alone can charm,  
The blessings which its touch would waken !

PADILLA.

No—

The course of right is single. Such a flaw  
As is created by a chief, whose place  
Or circumstance leads men to fix their thoughts  
Upon him with affection, when he swerves  
From duty, works more mischief to earth's faith

Than the victorious recreant can atone  
By years of wisest policy.

MONDEIAR.

Then perish—

He who has burst a nation's chains, must be  
Its master or its victim.

PADILLA.

I am doom'd then ;

My choice is made.

MARIA.

If not for these—or me—

You think in this great moment, look on him,  
Sole offspring of our love whom earth retains !  
Plead for yourself, Alphonso !

VELASCO.

Noble youth,

Plead for us all !

PADILLA.

Speak your desire, my son,  
As freely as to God.

ALPHONSO.

Mother, forgive me ;

My heart is in my father's, and his words  
Should have been mine if I had power to shape them.

PADILLA.

You hear him—through the unsullied lips of youth  
Heaven's answer breathes. Well said, my noble son!  
Look up, Maria!

[DONNA MARIA places her hands on PADILLA'S shoulders,  
and looks intently on his face.

MARIA.

I can read the future,  
Writ in the furrows of this steadfast face;  
The desperate struggle—the ungrateful herd—  
Sharp death and mangled story. Think again!

PADILLA.

I have thought all my life for such an hour—  
I must act now. Assure me that your courage  
Will quell this anguish.

MARIA.

I shall conquer it.

PADILLA.

And smile?

MARIA.

Yes; if you will it you shall find

A smile on this poor face, till death shall fix  
Its last in wax.

PADILLA.

That's brave ! The Council waits—  
Thither, my countrymen, I bear this life  
For you, which had been worthless if enwreath'd  
With treason's circlet ; Mondeiar, come with me.  
Bid me farewell. [To MARIA.

MARIA.

Farewell.

PADILLA.

Alphonso, wait  
Upon your mother ; she will be prouder of you  
Than when she clasp'd you first.

*[Exeunt PADILLA and MONDEIAR.]*

MARIA.

My friends, for all  
The mighty good you proffer'd, take my thanks :  
Forgive me ; I am faint.

*[VELASCO offers to support her ; she takes her son's arm.]*

MARIA.

Alphonso's arm  
Is strong enough to prop me ; Heaven preserve you !  
*[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE III.—*The Council-house of Toledo.* GIRON, VILLENA,  
TENDILLA, GOMEZ, OVANDO, and others discovered.

GIRON.

Whom wait we for? Our duty cries dispatch.

GOMEZ.

Padilla will be here anon.

GIRON.

Padilla!

At such a moment, must we idly sit  
Till he has surfeited with speech the rabble  
That doat upon his footsteps? Messengers  
Attend to tell the people's triumphs won  
In kindred cities.

VILLENA.

Let the first in rank  
Preside.

TENDILLA.

The first in rank! Well—for to-day—  
Giron that seat is yours. [Aside to OVANDO.]

GIRON (*having taken the central seat*).

Though slight desert  
Has raised me to this station, I can grace it  
With news most happy ;—news which proves the  
flame  
That triumphs in our city, no chance blaze  
Like that which an old earth-torch waves from cleft  
Of an extinct volcano, but the sign  
Of one huge fire that glows within Castile,  
And has already burst its shallow rind  
In Zamora and Burgos. With your leave,  
I'll ask the tidings of the Messengers  
Who thence wait on us.

*Enter two Messengers.*

GIRON.

Who depute you to us ?

MESSENGER.

The townsmen who command in both our cities—  
Which have one tale for each. Our Deputy,  
Returning home from Cortez with the shame  
Of voting for the Emperor's donative,  
Without an effort to obtain redress  
For outrages we suffer from the Regent,

Offer'd with words to cozen us ; but hands  
Of sturdy citizens prevented speech,  
Drew the poor sophist to the gate, and left him  
Free to the elements ; meanwhile, his house  
Was levell'd, and his costly goods were piled  
In glittering heaps, from which the poorest shrink  
As things accursed. The rest is in suspense  
And waits your counsel.

TENDILLA.

As the people won  
This freedom, I advise the people mould it.  
I move, that, in Toledo, every parish  
Choose by the votes of all a councillor  
To rule the city, till our just demands  
Be satisfied ; and that we urge this course  
On other cities.

VILLENA (*to GIRON*).

Do you hear this, Giron ?  
Is it for this the noblest blood in Spain  
Is perill'd ?

GIRON.

Be content ; Tendilla speaks  
The spirit of the hour, and I approve



The scheme he offers. I would only add,  
As the time presses, that, in every parish,  
The first in station take the votes, and name  
The councillor elected. If you all  
Agree, all rise.

[*All rise—Shouts without.*]

GIRON.

'Tis well. What means that shout?  
Padilla comes—too late.

*Enter PADILLA and MONDEIAR.*

GIRON.

Sit, noble friends.

PADILLA.

Your pardon—an unwelcome crowd too long  
Detain'd us. Do you meditate a scheme  
Of government for present need?

GIRON.

'Tis settled—

A council chosen by free votes of all;  
One for each parish.

PADILLA.

All? Reflect again—  
Has not a course of ages which begins

Beyond the Saracen, matured a power  
Incorporate in Toledo to preside  
In exigence like this? From age to age  
Renew'd from busy life, yet graced with honour  
By old heroic story, which imparts  
To citizens beset with care a sense  
Of true communion with the glorious Past  
And hopeful Future,—one of those old guilds  
That through the cities of Castile have nurtured  
Freedom in shapes of loyalty, that stand  
Like living pillars round the throne to guard it,  
And look remonstrance on it.

OVANDO.

Tyrannies,

Servile in infancy, in dotage cruel,  
Hollow in all. We'll sweep them to the Past,  
With which they boast alliance.

PADILLA.

Slave !

OVANDO.

Dost dare

Denounce me as a slave ?

PADILLA.

The worst of slaves—  
The bondsman of the moment, scarcely free  
To talk of yesterday.

MONDEIAR (*to* PADILLA).

Pray you, be calm.

PADILLA.

Calm!—while the whirlpool of the hour engulphs  
The growth of centuries! Pause ere ye rive,  
With strength of fever, things embedded long  
In social being; you'll uproot no form  
With which the thoughts and habits of weak mortals  
Have long been twined, without the bleeding rent  
Of thousand ties which to the common heart  
Of nature link it; wrench'd, perchance you'll mock  
A clumsy relic of forgotten days,  
While you have scatter'd in the dust unseen  
A thousand living crystals.

GIRON.

We have voted.

PADILLA.

Voted! Will no one join me to implore

Another thought? At least, dispatch, at once,  
Fit mission to our King, whence he may learn  
That we seek only hearing for such prayers  
As royal hearts should answer.

VILLENA.

To the King?

Must all end thus?

OVANDO.

To the King—the recreant?

PADILLA.

This in my presence—

[PADILLA *lays his hand on his sword, and advances  
towards OVANDO, but is stayed by MONDEIAR.*

Am I sunk so low  
That I must hear this treason, and not strike  
The speaker dead?

GIRON.

Ovando, do not raise  
Contention here: Padilla counsels wisely;  
If Charles reject our prayers—

PADILLA.

He'll not reject them:  
Mine only be the peril; let me seek him,

And if I bring not home his seal'd assent  
To all we justly claim, I'll bring this life  
To pay the forfeit.

GIRON.

No,—we cannot spare you.  
Let's number our demands; first, that the King  
Dismiss the Regent, and resume his rule  
In person over us.

PADILLA.

'Tis just; he'll grant it.

TENDILLA.

Next, that he fill all offices of state  
With true Castilians; that the Cortez meet  
Once in three years; that every city send  
Three to compose it, one the Clergy's choice,  
One from the Nobles, from the Commons one.

GIRON.

The Commons!—well!—so be our prayer.

VILLENA.

The Commons!

GIRON.

Be ruled, Villena; 'tis best so; what else?

OVANDO.

That the King's choice in marriage shall await  
The sanction of the Cortez.

PADILLA.

I will perish—  
Ere I consent to ask my king to yield  
His equal part in the divinest joy  
Our sins have left us, to the chance caprice  
Of heartless policy—to become a slave  
In that respect which masters, who are men,  
Leave their slaves free to choose in. Do ye mean this?

GIRON.

We'll speak of that hereafter ; here's more news.

*Enter Messenger from Segovia.*

MESSENGER.

Segovia craves your help, invested closely  
By Adrian's troops, under his judge Ronquillo.

GIRON.

The war begun ? Has then Segovia risen ?

MESSENGER.

Have ye not heard how Tordesillas died  
On his return from Cortez ? Scorning threats

That thickly murmur'd as he pass'd, he turn'd  
In the church porch to speak, and waved his hand  
With noble motion to enforce the silence  
His stately presence claim'd ; but e'er a word  
Escaped his lips, a hundred massive hands  
Were spread to grasp him, and his form was lost  
Amidst the infuriate crowds who bore him thence  
Shrieking for mercy with a voice that sank  
From sharpest cry of anguish to faint moan  
Of wearied infancy ; and though the Priests,  
Robed in procession met them, and upraised  
The Host to win a moment's time for prayer,  
Swept with him to the gibbet's foot, nor ceased  
Their madden'd roar, till lifting him to swing  
From the detested beam, they found the work  
Of death completed, and with sudden awe  
Gazed on their rescued victim.

PADILLA.

Merciful Heaven !

Is this the people's justice ?

GIRON.

It is past.

Say on.

## MESSENGER.

Ronquillo came, by Adrian sent  
To punish, not the reckless crowd alone  
But all Segovians ; he proclaim'd us outlaws,  
And now invests our walls ; while Fonseca,  
Flush'd with Medina's ravage, where he burn'd  
The labours of a thousand looms, leads veterans  
To join Ronquillo. If you grant no aid,  
Segovia's doom is seal'd, and shameful death  
Awaits the noblest of our citizens  
Who would have died to stay the rabble's vengeance.

## PADILLA.

There's work for me more fit than war of words.  
Let me depart your soldier, with no troops  
Save such as, on the instant, choose to join  
My standard, whether disciplined in arms  
Or fresh from workman's labour.

## GIRON.

Nobly urged.

## VILLENNA.

Will you thus arm him to achieve the crown  
The rabble fain would give him ?



MONDEIAR.

O base fear !

This day, when urged by thousands to accept it,  
He spurn'd it with a singleness of nature  
Beyond your reach of guessing.

PADILLA.

Brother, peace—

Disdain to answer him ; my heart's too full—  
Castilians ! If ye think that in this mould  
Along one fibre creeps a wish so vile  
As this poor gamester in his squalid fancy  
Deems possible, explore it with your swords ;  
Here on my knee, with naked breast, I claim  
Your quittance or your steel.

[*Kneels.*

GIRON.

Rise, noble soldier ;  
I'll answer for your truth with life, and all  
Will wager for it their's as freely.

*The other Councillors, rising.*

All.

PADILLA.

Another hour shall see my march began ;

Let me but crave one boon ; the Queen Joanna,  
Amidst the conflicts of the time, may lack  
Observance——

OVANDO.

Have we leisure to attend  
The humours of distraction ?

PADILLA.

Leisure ? Yours ?

Your lifetime, if it would outlast the world,  
Were nobly barter'd for an hour employ'd  
In chasing from the mirror of that soul  
One film that dims it. I would pray the council  
Leave that my wife may tend her, and my son  
Serve her with page's duty.

GIRON.

Deem this order'd

As you desire.

PADILLA.

Attend one parting prayer—  
May strength continue to our cause, to claim  
Bravely our just demands, and, those achieved,  
May grace be with it nobly to dissolve  
In old obedience ! As you keep this hope  
God prosper you ! Farewell.

GIRON.

Farewell, great soldier.

*[Exit PADILLA.]*

At noon we'll meet again ; till then farewell.

*[Exeunt all but GIRON and VILLENA.]*

Villena, you must leave our game to me ;

I comprehend and hate Padilla, you

Simply detest him. You would play with men

As with your dice and counters, which may stand

For vulgar natures, but afford no mark

By which a noble constancy of soul

May bear its estimate ; and as a child,

Moving an unknown power, confounds the wisest,

So, while you weave your schemes with common  
chances,

Greatness perplexes all.

VILLENA.

If he should come

Victorious home ?

GIRON.

He *will* return victorious,

But with scarce half the troops he carries hence,

And more than half of them rude clowns who leave

Their trades, in sudden passion to be school'd

By discipline they guess not, and to smart  
With wounds, which the train'd soldier having learn'd  
In youth to image with his future, bears  
As ills familiar, but to craftsman's sense  
Will seem strange sorrows. Then, be sure, that

Charles

Will scorn the missives of revolted subjects,  
And our proud chief, who fancies that he arms  
At once for king and rabble, disabused,  
Will stand aghast, with nature rent in twain  
And fall to ruin ; meanwhile he and all  
Who worship him, have left the state to us.

VILLENA.

Say rather to a council rabble-chosen.

GIRON.

Tut ! you as dimly read the common mind  
As the heroic spirit. Trust me, Marquis,  
The lower that the soil lies, and the wider  
The surface it presents, the kindlier strikes  
The germ of new dominion there ; the rankness  
Of elements that moulder round its stem  
Shall shed imperial purple through its flower  
When it shall flaunt in sunshine.

[*Shouts without.*]

VILLENNA.

Those shouts hail  
Padilla's band departing.

GIRON.

Well! We talk  
More safely thus protected by their clamour,  
While they exhaust the passion which inspires it.  
Believe me, comrade, when the incense floats  
Most thickly round the idol's shrine, its fire  
Begins to smoulder. Let us divide the stakes  
Fairly for once: the glory of the day  
Padilla justly wins; its spoils be ours!

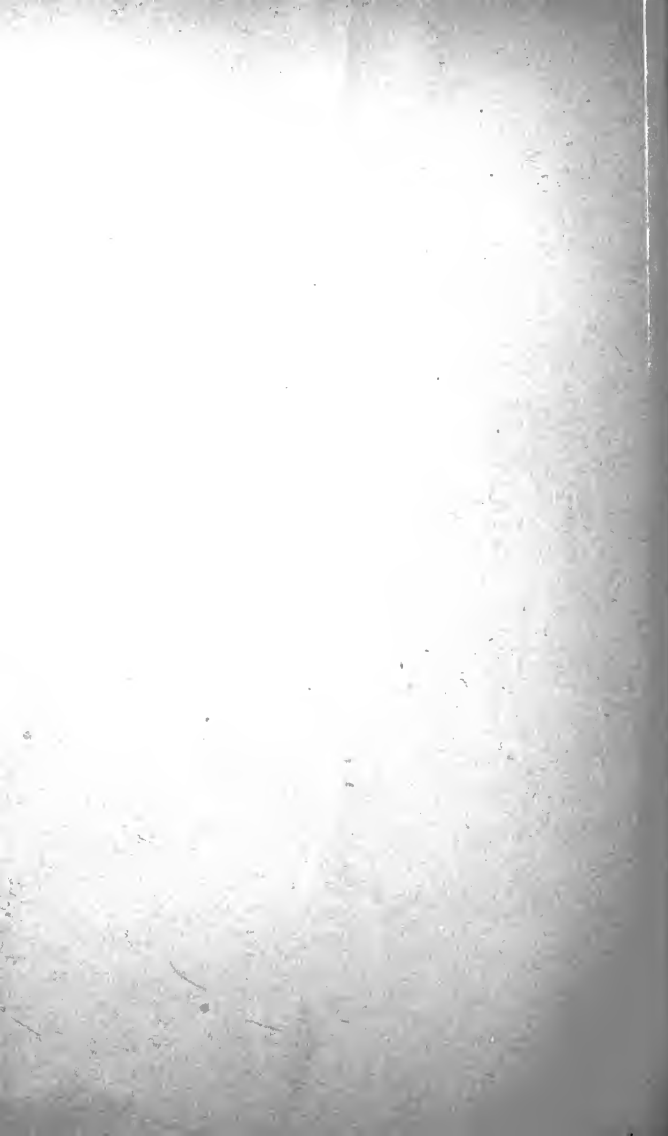
*[Exeunt.]*



## ACT III.

A Month is supposed to elapse between the Second and Third Acts.

The Scene throughout the Third Act lies in Avila.





## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Avila.*

VILLENA.

You say our fortune ripens ; where is its show  
Of fruit or blossom to repay our sojourn  
In this dull Avila ?

GIRON.

Have not all cities  
Which tower throughout Castile embraced our cause,  
And hither sent their delegates to form  
The Holy Junta, who this day assemble ?  
And though Padilla's fame to Mondeiar gave  
Toledo's voice, do I not sit for Burgos ?

VILLENA.

And what is won for me but manners curb'd  
By stricter supervision ?

GIRON.

So you think

This state will last! 'Twill break in thousand fragments;  
*Then* he who leads the troops will rule Castile.

VILLENA.

Such luck will be the General's who returns  
This hour with fresh-won glories.

GIRON.

And this hour  
The messengers dispatch'd to Charles will meet us  
And, as I prophesied, without redress.  
The Junta, who propose to sway men's hearts  
By solemn plainness, in the open square  
Sit to claim oaths of fealty to their power,  
Without regard of Charles, unless he grant  
Petitions which, I know, he scorn'd to hear.  
Padilla will refuse to take that oath,  
And the alternative is exile. Guess  
Who then will lead the army.

[*Trumpets without.*]

Hark! those sounds  
Proclaim the Junta sitting. I am late.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The great Square before the Cathedral of Avila.—  
The Delegates of the Holy Junta discovered in white robes,  
seated on stone benches ranged in semi-circle ; MONDEIAR,  
as Delegate of Toledo, presiding.*

MONDEIAR.

'Tis time we should receive the Ambassadors  
Whom we dispatch'd to Charles, and who attend us.

*Enter GIRON.*

MONDEIAR.

The Delegate of Burgos—have you sworn ?

GIRON.

At dawn beside the altar.

MONDEIAR.

Take your place.

[GIRON *sits.*

*Enter Messengers.*

MESSENGER.

The General craves admission !

MONDEIAR.

Will you give  
Padilla or the Ambassadors first audience ?

GIRON.

If I may read your wish, we vote Padilla.

[*All bow.*]

MONDEIAR.

Tell the commander we desire his presence.

[*Exit Messenger.*]

He'll pay our courtesy.

*Enter* PADILLA.

MONDEIAR.

Sit, noble brother.

[PADILLA *sits.*]

Segovia's Delegate prays leave to tell

Your prowess at his city.

DELEGATE OF SEGOVIA.

While 'twas circled,  
And, by Ronquillo, destined for the sword,  
Padilla, by one mighty onset, dash'd  
His living wall of soldiers into knots  
Of wondering cravens, and dispell'd the siege,  
Before Segovia own'd a throb of hope,  
Or rose from her despair to breathe a wish  
For blessings on his arms.

PADILLA.

Small praise be mine.

Ronquillo, sent to punish, not subdue,  
Thought only to meet citizens made feeble  
By conscious guilt of blood ; and from the bands  
That follow'd me, stout hearted though untrain'd,  
Fled staggering with amazement at the might  
Plain honesty confers. Tell your Segovians,  
I wish, instead of stifling me with thanks,  
They had made their gibbets blacken with the leaders  
Of those who stain'd the rising of Castile  
With Tordesillas' murder ; but alas !  
With base impunity of crime, revolt  
Confounds all qualities !

MONDEIAR.

This is not a time  
For such a question : we are met to weigh  
Your claims to honour, and the best remains—  
Proud Fonseca's defeat.

PADILLA.

Account it little—  
A rush—a charge or two—and hot pursuit  
Of panic-stricken soldiers, whom to hunt  
For sword or capture, was as base an office  
As to chastise a slave.

MONDEIAR.

Valladolid—

PADILLA.

Open'd its gates without a blow—or blows  
Swift conquest made forgotten. Thence I bore  
The jewels, sceptres, crowns and regal robes  
Of both the kingdoms, which the' astonish'd Regent  
Yielded, without a word, and scarcely met  
My glance, while I commanded him to creep  
Away unharm'd, and lead a shameful life  
In the city he had scourged.

GIRON.

Most bravely done.

One form alone remains before we render  
For all our solemn thanks—that you accept  
The oath of fealty.

PADILLA.

Oath—for what? to whom?

MONDEIAR.

An oath of fealty to the Holy Junta  
And ancient customs of Castile.

PADILLA.

Small need,

Methinks, for such an oath from one who serves  
With arms, not counsels. Does the oath you claim  
Consist with oaths already sworn to Charles?

MONDEIAR.

Yes; we allow of duty to the king,  
Provided he concede the just demands  
We laid before him.

PADILLA.

O make no reserves—

The great soul trusts! Think how you trusted first,  
And at whose bidding—his, who from a cell,  
Savagely framed for cruel penance, stepp'd  
To the majestic use of courtly arts,  
Which luxury makes facile, while he wore  
The purple o'er the sackcloth that inflamed  
His flesh to torture, with a grace as free  
As when it floats o'er worshipp'd womanhood  
Or princely youth; his who had learn'd in vigils  
Of lonely night, such wisdom for command  
Of the world's issues, as if spirits breathed  
The long experiences of wisest statesmen  
Into a single breast; who from a soul,  
Which men imagined withering like his frame

In painful age, pour'd, as from living urn,  
Exhaustless courage into soldier's hearts  
And made them heroes. What a power burst forth  
From the wan Cardinal's expanding frame,  
While, with the fluttering voice, that grew as clear  
As note of clarion, he invoked Castile  
To swear allegiance to her stripling prince,  
In faith that he, whom Heaven ordains to rule  
Will have Heaven's aid to govern! You replied,  
As, through Ximènes, Isabella spake,  
And pray'd you, while her daughter's soul should lie  
In cloud, to own her grandson.

MONDEIAR.

Noble trust—

Foul recompense.

PADILLA.

Judge not by common rules  
The opening passage of a mighty life!  
Think you the youth of him who e'er he reach'd  
The age a spendthrift stripling sighs for, won  
The crown of empire in the game of earth,  
Should be esteem'd like youth which princes lavish  
In wayward follies, and the servile herd



Excuse with fondness, which expands to worship  
When, tired of vapid luxuries, it subsides  
Into the decent pomp that stiffly leads  
A passionless procession? No; the nature  
On bitter nutriment of wisdom fed  
In its bright spring-time, starts not from the root  
A graceful sapling, but, with gnarled rind,  
Spreads to unlovely compass, till its boughs  
Shade earth and tower in air. Let us be patient  
Till greatness immature grow ripe, to trace  
In the stern progress of one regal soul  
The infancy of ages. We are arm'd  
To teach that royal spirit to be just,  
And I'll await the issue.

GIRON.

You must choose  
At once, like us, between the oath and exile.

PADILLA.

Exile—for me?

MONDEIAR.

Such is, indeed, the choice  
Proposed to all. Great Heaven! you will not leave us  
For such poor scruple?

PADILLA.

Exile—that is to leave  
My country, in her need, to men who count  
Her dangers as their chances of high fortune!

GIRON.

You gaze on me—who mean you?

PADILLA.

Who? Your soul,  
Shivering from thin expanse, which guilty hope  
Lent its poor compass, knows—and knowing quails  
for!

MONDEIAR.

No more of this; the embassy attends us.

PADILLA (*aside*).

The men return'd from Charles! Why faints my  
heart?  
They may determine all.

*Enter TENDILLA and other Ambassadors.*

MONDEIAR.

Tendilla, welcome;  
What is the Emperor's answer?

TENDILLA.

None—save threats  
Which, borne by Flemish emissaries, stay'd us  
Before we reach'd his presence.

PADILLA.

Did you fly  
And leave our prayers unutter'd? What made death  
So terrible?

TENDILLA.

It was not death appall'd us—  
But shames too vile for a Castilian tongue  
To utter; for which Flemish arms were strung  
And Flemish eyes were greedy.

PADILLA.

Lost! Undone!

MONDEIAR (*aside to PADILLA*).

Now, will you hesitate?

GIRON.

Our oath must now  
Proscribe the Emperor.

[PADILLA, who has been sitting at the extremity of the circle, rises in great agitation, and is about to speak, when a Messenger enters.]

MESSENGER.

My lords, a youth,  
Who styles himself the general's son, craves audience.

MONDEIAR (*to PADILLA*).

Will you confer with him apart ?

PADILLA.

Not I—

His mission's not for me ; although these eyes  
Have not embraced him since I went to battle,  
I know he would not seek me in this hour  
Of solemn duty.

MESSENGER.

No ; he prays the Junta  
To hear his tidings.

MONDEIAR (*to the Junta*).

Are you pleased to hear them ?

[*All bow.*]

Bid him approach.

[*Exit Messenger.*]

I'll answer for his bearing.

*Enter* ALPHONSO.PADILLA (*aside*).

He does not rush into my arms ; that's right—  
He does not glance this way ; well done.

ALPHONSO.

My Lords,

The service you permitted me to pay  
The Queen Joanna makes me bold to bring  
News of a change which, for three days, has fill'd  
Her household with amazement. The dull sorrow  
That weigh'd her silken lashes down has fled,  
And eyes, which rarely caught the sunbeam, spread  
With wild intelligence. Her ashy lips  
Long seal'd in sullen silence, or unclosed  
Only to murmur indistinct despair,  
Part flush'd with crimson ; and, in rapid change,  
The broken music of her queenly life  
Breathes and commands her childhood's scenes to live  
In brightness that appals us, yet, to her,  
Seen through the parted foldings of the mists  
That have o'erwhelm'd her spirit, they appear  
As starting from a depth of years she thinks  
Have pass'd upon her lonely state. My mother,  
Who day and night keeps watch beside her couch,  
Believes her soul is kindling.

PADILLA (*starting up*).

It shall kindle !

Heaven does not mock us ! When we swore to serve

Joanna's son, we saved the mother's right  
If sense should visit her; and now it dawns  
In happiest season.

MONDEIAR.

'Tis most true, our oath  
Bore such exception.

PADILLA.

Else we had been traitors,  
Not only to the stricken princess living,  
But to the dead, whom each Castilian holds  
Sacred above all living womanhood;—  
Her from whose veins Joanna's life was drawn:  
Who, o'er the rage of battles and the toils  
Of empire, bent an aspect more imbued  
With serious beauty earth partakes with heaven,  
Than cloister nurtured in the loveliest saint  
It shrined from human cares. Her daughter wakes,  
As from the sleep of death, to claim her throne,  
And ye sit mute, and do not bend a knee  
To bless your God!

GIRON.

Must we disturb the course  
Of our momentous duties to enquire  
How madness glares or flickers? E'er ye deem this

More than the gossip of a weary chamber,  
Think in what sad abasement of disease  
Joanna's spirit lies—how all regards  
Of parents, kindred, country, rank, were lost  
In childish adoration of the form  
A wreckless husband wore ; for whose slight image  
Cold, tempests, dangers, injuries and scorns  
Were pass'd unheeded, till her spirit, stung  
By jealous fury, dock'd 'mid laughter's rage,  
The locks that in their golden meshes held  
Her truant lord ; how, tranced in grief, she bore  
A child unconscious, while her thoughts were fix'd  
On her far distant scorner : how, when dead,  
She cherish'd him as living, till from dreams  
Of frightful rapture startled, to a tomb  
Beneath Granada's walls by night she bore him,  
And cursed the torches when the tempest blew  
Their flames athwart death's panoply ! And this lady  
Ye seek to rule these kingdoms !

PADILLA.

Shallow scorner !

There's not a deed you cast on her as shame  
That does not prove her noble. If, on ship-board,  
The pictured likeness of her plighted lord

Then unbeheld, grew precious as it charm'd  
Her perilous bridal voyage, till she embraced  
The living idol who in grace outshone  
The vision of the desolate sea, and thus  
The mein so sigh'd for, so assured, became,  
In spite of wrongs and scorn, an image set  
So deeply in affection, that no guilt  
Could ruffle it, no falsehood dim, nor death  
Touch with decay,—I tell your lordly wisdom,  
There is more royalty in such a love  
Supremely seated in a woman's heart  
Than in the power of monarchs. God alone  
Knows what she bore in that self-tyranny  
Which to the sweet rebellion of a tear  
Denied its license ; but through all she made  
Of grief a lonely throne ; whence she shall rise  
In majesty relumined !

GIRON.

'Tis delusion,—

It may be falsehood.

PADILLA.

Lords—I will not smite him—

Hear me ! I wager all I have and am

On this great issue. See ! I draw my sword,



And swear allegiance to Castilian laws  
And to my rightful Queen, Joanna!

[*Draws.*

GIRON.

Treason!

PADILLA.

So be it answer'd if I fail to show  
The Queen restored to govern. Give me, Lords,  
A day—an hour—to wake the royal pulse  
That lives in her great nature; if I fail,  
I will confess this charge of treason just,  
And crave a traitor's sentence.

MONDEIAR (*to* PADILLA).

Be not rash.

PADILLA.

I follow Heaven that points; at this hour's close  
Attend Joanna's palace; let the scaffold  
Meanwhile be furnish'd for me; and if, then,  
Ye do not own her queen, let me ascend it.

GIRON.

Grant his mad prayer.

MONDEIAR.

Dear brother, pause—your foe  
Echoes your wish.

PADILLA.

The voice of the Eternal,  
That breathes through organs which seem framed to  
mock it,  
Speaks now in Giron's.

[*To the Junta.*]

If you accept my life  
In pledge, stand up.

[*All rise.*]

I shall not ask a moment  
Beyond the hour, to hail the Queen or die.

MONDEIAR.

Adjourn the sitting. Brother, I will seek you  
At Queen Joanna's palace. God uphold you!

PADILLA.

He will—He does.

[*Exeunt all but PADILLA and ALPHONSO.*]PADILLA (*embracing ALPHONSO*).

Alphonso, you have brought  
Tidings more glad than on the thirsty ear  
Of dying hope have pour'd since fortune's game  
Had empire for a prize. My nature, shiver'd  
To fragments from its centre, closes whole  
As flawless crystal. I will circle in

The powers of new-born freedom with a band  
Firmly expanding as they grow within it,  
Beneath a diadem whence steadfast rays  
Shall, through the fiercest struggles of the realm,  
Shed reconciling calm.

ALPHONSO.

But if this hope  
Should fail ?

PADILLA.

My work in this world will be done,  
And I shall pass absolved ; but do not dream it ;  
Let not such fear impede your bounding feet  
Which should be wing'd with joy ! Among the spoils  
Brought from Valladolid, you'll find the crowns,  
Sceptres, and robes, and jewels of Castile  
And Aragon ; see them, at once, disposed  
Around the inner chamber of the Queen  
That's curtain'd from her sight—send me a Captain  
Fit to direct my soldiers—then expect me  
To wait your royal mistress. Fly !

[Exit ALPHONSO.]

PADILLA (*alone*).

My soul  
Quivers with triumph ; yes ; the woman's shatter'd

But the Queen lives! The infant through whose  
dreams

Attendant homage shed obsequious hues  
Which made them purple, and who, waking, saw  
The brow that wore the fairest crown of earth  
Bent with a mother's earnest love, received  
A sense of royalty which touch'd will wake  
Midst the mind's ruin. Though in deep abyss  
Perturb'd the fountain of its reason heaves,  
If I can bid the shows of queenly power  
Nod o'er its waters, they will spread serene  
To give the steady reflex to the day  
From majesty's still mirror.

*Enter a Captain.*

CAPTAIN.

I attend you  
At your son's bidding.

PADILLA.

Right; you know the palace  
Where the Queen rests in Avila?

CAPTAIN.

The Queen?—

She who is sunk in madness?

PADILLA.

She who, this day  
Restored, shall bless Castile. Draw up your soldiers,  
So that they line her courtyard; keep them voiceless,  
Till you behold aloft a banner wave—  
Then raise the shouts of triumph; bid each man  
Fling up his helm, and cry, "Long live the Queen!"  
And rush with all your officers to throng  
Her chamber, that she may assume her state  
Girt with Castilian heroes.

CAPTAIN.

May your hopes  
Prove true!

PADILLA.

They shall prove true; make haste—away!  
[Exit Captain.]

PADILLA (*alone*).

My life—my honour's life—my country's life  
Hang on this hour. Spirit of Isabella,  
Whom the strong peril of thy loved Castile  
Constrains to listen, shine into the soul  
Of thy distracted daughter with such look  
As after my first skirmish, 'neath the towers  
Of old Grenada, thou didst lavish on me

A stripling, gash'd and fluster'd to thy tent  
Conducted to receive more charming praise  
Than manhood ever wins ; when golden locks  
Stray'd from the heroic forehead into films  
Of sunlight, and a slender, jewell'd hand  
That lightly fell upon my bending head  
Shot ecstasy through all my frame ! I see  
That aspect beam ; I feel that touch ; I come !

[*Exit PADILLA.*]

SCENE III.—*An Antechamber in the Palace of the QUEEN*  
JOANNA.—*Ladies waiting.*

*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA.

Is the Queen sleeping still ?

LADY.

Yes ; but she smiled  
Just now in sleep, and murmur'd out your name.

MARIA.

My name ? She has not known me through the weeks  
I have attended her.

LADY.

I am sure she named you ;  
And yet she stirr'd not while your son disposed  
Sceptres, robes, crowns, and gems beyond the curtains  
That fall around her.

*Enter PADILLA.*

MARIA (*running to PADILLA*).

My dear husband—

PADILLA.

Hold—

I dare not clasp you to my heart till Heaven  
Assure our triumph.

MARIA.

How ?

PADILLA (*to the attendant Ladies*).

Please you to watch  
The Queen's awaking. When she stirs, let music,  
A lute touch'd softly to some old dull tune  
She may have heard in Flanders, meet her ear.

[*Exeunt Ladies.*]

PADILLA.

Maria, on this hour depends the fate  
Not of our household only, but Castile,  
Which lives or withers as Joanna's heart  
Shall glow or fail. Be near her when she wakes;  
Strive to dispel ignoble memories from her,  
While I abide your summons.

[*Exit MARIA. Soft music within.*]

PADILLA (*alone*).

Hark the music  
Bespeaks her waking; now be with us Heaven !

[*Exit PADILLA.*]



SCENE IV.—*The Chamber of the QUEEN JOANNA.—A royal Chamber, divided by curtains which fall in a crescent round a couch on which the QUEEN JOANNA is reclining. At the head of the couch is placed a Chair of State, beside which DONNA MARIA and ALPHONSO are standing—at its foot an Attendant Lady is sitting on a low stool with a lute, on which she is playing.—She ceases to play as the scene opens.*

JOANNA (*waking*).

Whence is that air ? I think I heard it play'd  
Long since ; was it by you ?

LADY.

No, madam, never ;  
'Tis of my country, Flanders.

JOANNA.

Flanders ? True—  
I now remember, years—long years—ago  
In your gay land I heard it. I was a bride then,  
And the most glorious face that Nature shaped  
In ecstasy, look'd down with love on mine ;  
You well may wonder—'tis a tale so old—  
To see me living still.

MARIA.

Your Highness' age

Leaves years of life to come.

JOANNA.

Ay years, years, years—

For I am doom'd, to wear a wondrous life,  
Far off, it dawn'd in lustre ; then 'twas pall'd  
In blackness streak'd with horrors ; now it bursts  
From sleep by fits, when long past things flash out  
In shapes that crowd the chambers of my brain  
To agony that spends its force in throbbing ;  
And then I sleep again—long dreamless sleeps—  
Which must endure for years ; so Time sweeps by  
And leaves me a dull monument to keep  
His saddest records ; none would own me now  
For Isabella's daughter.

MARIA.

All who knew

Her image living, trace it in your Highness.

JOANNA.

No ; I alone of those that breathe have known her ;  
And I can tell you things no living eye  
But mine beheld. When the world's mighty strife

'Twixt Moor and Christian, in which radiant saints  
Vouchsafed to mingle with our hosts, was crown'd  
By cession, in earth's breathless silence, made  
Of tamed Grenada, by my mother's side  
I sat, and saw the enormous towers unscathed  
As still defying siege, beneath the range  
Of ice-clad mountains, which with peaks of fire  
Look'd pinnacled for angels' feet. Our veterans  
Stood like mail'd statues, till the giant cross  
Of virgin silver, which my father raised  
Before him in his battles, shone erect  
Against heaven's azure, on the Alhambra's top,  
Flinging its sacred shadow on the dome  
Which sullenly heaved under it ; then all  
Fell on their knees, and down scar-furrow'd cheeks  
Large tears roll'd slowly, as the hymn of praise  
Floated on air ; but none advanced a step  
Toward the surrender'd gates, till thence appear'd  
Hundreds of Christian captives freed from depths  
Of Moorish dungeons, shrinking in strange sunlight,  
Who totter'd to my mother's feet to bless  
Her face, like those, they said, which beam'd in sleep  
That follow'd torture. Then, what shouts arose !  
What endless torrent of plumed troops swept by us,

With cataract roar! It rushes on my brain—  
It racks me—lay me down.

[MARIA assists JOANNA to lie down and adjusts the pillows.]

JOANNA.

Your touch is gentle—

What are you call'd?

MARIA.

Maria de Pacheco;

I've watch'd a month beside your Highness.

JOANNA.

Ha!

I think I heard—it must be long ago—  
You call'd an infant by my slighted name;  
Does she live still?

MARIA (*bursting into tears*).

In heaven.

JOANNA.

Fie! do not weep,

You see I do not weep who outlive all;  
I have not shed a tear since that long night  
Which I endured beside Medina's postern,  
When, while the snow weigh'd down the fluttering robe  
That clad me, I defied the minion lords

Who strove to win me back to the sad couch  
I left to make my lonely way to him  
Whose soul was pledged to mine ; they tore me thence ;  
But I escaped their feeble bonds again,  
And traversed land and sea to find—to find—  
A Flemish wanton snaring Philip's soul  
With golden tresses. See ! She kneels and prays  
With baby prettiness and honied words  
For pardon—never ! Doff those glistening locks  
And stand, unshaded by a curl, the gaze  
Of her you have stabb'd ! I am a Princess still  
And will have justice ! What if Philip frown ?  
I like him best when frowning—

Do I wander ?

I am far sunk in years, and age has licence  
To babble of old times.

MARIA.

All women shared  
The wrongs you bore from Philip.

JOANNA.

Shared ? what mean you ?  
When did I crave a partner for my grief,  
Or talk of wrongs ? I was too wan for Philip—

The beautiful ! He gazes on me now—  
Smile—smile—so for eternity !

MARIA.

In death

Be all his frailties shrouded !

JOANNA.

Death ! You are fair,

Yet, from your lips, the dismal echo breathes  
Of the world's lie. This cold and barren earth  
And the dull roof of clouds that clip it round,  
Leaden and low, to shroud it from God's azure,  
Ring with that falsehood ; he was sick and lay  
In trance, and all who envied me conspired  
To call it death, and laid him in a grave—  
But thence I pluck'd him—pale—but not more pale  
Than I have seen him when I watch'd his couch  
After long revels, whence he woke to know me,  
And sometimes thank me. This poor heart still beats,  
And, by its beating, I'm assur'd he lives.

MARIA.

Since you so fervently desire his life  
I'll wish him living ; but yourself entomb'd him  
In marble at Grenada.

JOANNA.

So—you have heard  
That rare device; how, through each day encamp'd,  
I curtain'd him, and bore him on by night,  
Loathing all roofs, that I might laugh at those  
Who watch'd his waking. 'Tis a dismal journey—  
The torches flicker through its mists—the sleet  
Descends to quench them—I'll not track it on—  
Tell me how fares the world, what path your husband  
Treads of its dusty ways?

MARIA.

He is one whose name  
Your Highness may have heard—John de Padilla—  
Whose youth won glory in the Moorish war,  
And whose life now awaits your Highness' service.

JOANNA.

I knew a boy so named, whose dawning valour  
My parents cherish'd when they lived in camp  
At Medun; can he live still?

MARIA.

He attends  
Your gracious bidding.

JOANNA.

Let him come this instant ;  
I little dream'd a nobleman who knew me  
In my bright childhood lives.

MARIA (*to ALPHONSO*).

Inform Padilla

The Queen commands his presence.

[*Exit ALPHONSO.*]

JOANNA.

Queen ! I'll take

My state to welcome him ; set me my chair,  
I'll fill it like a throne, and shame my mockers.

[*MARIA places the Chair of State in front, and assists  
JOANNA to take it.*]

*Enter PADILLA, followed by ALPHONSO.*PADILLA (*kneeling before JOANNA*).

I pray your Majesty to look with grace  
On your distracted subjects.

JOANNA.

Mine ? You mock me ;

I am only sovereign of these rooms,—these ladies  
My few poor subjects. Let me look upon you ;  
'Tis said you are the glorious youth who won



Two crescent standards 'neath Grenada's walls  
With marvellous prowess ; rise ; it cannot be—  
Those battles have been hush'd an age, and you  
Are in your prime still ; yet you are like the boy  
My mother loved to praise.

PADILLA.

I am the same  
Whom that rich guerdon bless'd. Let me assure  
My own the happy brow on which it lighted  
By one most sacred memory which none other  
Of my degree can cherish. When the sovereigns,  
After Grenada's capture, held their court  
In radiant Seville, I once shared the feast  
Of their small household, and when sunset closed  
The pastimes gracious Royalty had plann'd  
For festal youth, and I was shrinking homeward  
Full of delight, I saw the Queen with smile  
That lent authority's augustest presence  
The charm of angel, beckon me to wait  
Upon her steps ;—I follow'd to the shrine  
At which, with her, the royal children kneel'd  
In vesper adoration. Softest light  
Shed by one silver lamp reveal'd the walls

Of alabaster, storied with the deeds  
Of saints and martyrs, carved in white as stainless  
As the fantastic wonders nature shapes  
In Alpine caverns. By your side was John,  
Your rosy brother ; opposite to him  
Your sister Isabella bent a head  
So stately and so sad, as if she felt  
Chill shadow of her destiny to wear  
The crown of Portugal with speedy change  
For cypress and for amaranth. With arm  
Tightening about her neck, and eye upturn'd,  
Stood Kate the youngest.

JOANNA.

I behold them all—  
I see you kneeling with us ; and a strain  
Wafted from childhood murmurs through my heart  
And makes it lighter.

I think I must have dream'd  
Strange, heavy dreams ;—for it seems yesterday  
When we were ranged beneath my mother's eye  
Obedient children ; Kate scarce totter'd then—  
She may live still ; oh tell me, is there one  
To call me sister ?

PADILLA.

Katherine is queen in England.

JOANNA.

England? I was in England once—three months  
Feasted at Windsor, by a monarch styled  
The Seventh Henry. Oh that I had perish'd  
Before I touch'd its shore!

PADILLA.

I pray you, wherefore?

JOANNA.

Because death then had clasp'd me in an hour  
Of Philip's love. For weeks we had been toss'd  
Upon the wintry seas, from Flanders bound  
For Spain, with no companions but our sailors,  
Rough, weather-beaten men, with grizzly locks  
And tawny limbs, whose kindness raised my wonder,  
For never from my women's tenderest care  
Felt I such true observance as wild ocean  
Had taught her mates; and Philip's heart was soften'd  
By dear remorse that made me bless the storms  
That waken'd it, till lightning struck our mast  
In the black valley of two mountain seas,  
Lit into hungry crimson by strange fire

That revell'd in the dripping cordage ; changed  
The sails to sheets of tatter'd flame, and show'd  
Gaunt visages of brave men whom the fate  
That yawn'd and glared around us struck to shapes,  
Immovable with horror ; in that instant  
By flash of a huge splinter, as it fell,  
I saw my husband's face bent down on mine  
With such remorseful beauty as o'erpaid  
My years of weary sorrow. How I cursed  
The dismal beach of Weymouth, where I woke  
From happy trance to find myself in life !

PADILLA.

Lady, you then were on your way to Spain  
To solemnise your heirship of the crown  
Which now is yours. Oh let it from your brow  
Shine on Castile !

JOANNA.

My brow ?—you cannot mean it—  
My crown ?—how mine ? Where is my brother John ?  
Is he not heir of all ?

PADILLA.

From noblest hopes  
A nation ever cherish'd in its prince,

Ere his first year of bridal joy had flown,  
God call'd him, and the youth unmurmuring left  
Earth's fairest lot ; and, in his tomb, a babe,  
The blighted fruit of happy love, awaits  
A two-fold waking.

JOANNA.

Now I see it all ;  
My crown is wrested from me by a father,  
And he is mighty.

PADILLA.

Ferdinand is dead.

JOANNA.

Dead ? When he died, did no one urge my right ?  
You said my sister Isabella died—  
Where was my son—on whom I have not gazed  
Since his stern beauty fill'd my wasted arms ?  
It rises on me now with face that frown'd  
In answer to the smiles my poor heart lavish'd,  
To smite it ! Charles usurps his mother's throne—  
Tell me no more ; let me lie down again,  
And dream away my days.

PADILLA.

He held the crown

For you, till mercy should dispel the clouds  
Which now are melting in the gracious sunlight  
Shed on your spirit. We had honour'd still  
His glorious youth, but that he left Castile  
To foreign minions ; against these we rose ;  
And from their grasp we have redeem'd the crown  
For you, our sovereign lady, whom we pray  
To wear it.

JOANNA (*starting from the chair*).

Won for me ?

[*At a sign from PADILLA, ALPHONSO draws aside the curtains which had divided the chamber, disclosing a magnificent saloon furnished with large mirrors—terminating in a balcony, beyond which the towers of the Cathedral are seen—the sceptres, crown, and regalia of Castile and Aragon disposed around the saloon.*]

PADILLA.

Behold—

The ancient symbols of the regal power  
Rescued for you !

JOANNA.

Can this be real ?

[ALPHONSO presents the Crown of Castile kneeling to JOANNA, who takes it in her hand ; her fingers play hurriedly over the jewels.]

'Tis real ;

This is the crown which great Ximenes placed

Upon my forehead in Toledo's square,  
When I was hail'd as heiress of these realms;  
How the vast pomp expands before my soul,  
Which swells to compass it! And this is mine!  
My own! Brave soldier, place it on my head!

PADILLA (*placing the Crown on JOANNA's head*).

Forgive me; my hands tremble with delight;  
Permit my wife to fix that robe. [*To ALPHONSO*] The  
signal!

[*ALPHONSO waves a banner from the balcony; MARIA arrays JOANNA in one of the royal robes; as she does so JOANNA catches a view of herself in a mirror and stands gazing with delight. Shouts arise without and cries of "Long live the Queen!"*

JOANNA.

Is that my form—the form I thought decay'd  
And shrunk in age? What shouts are those?

PADILLA.

The voice

Of your enraptured people.

[*Shouts continue—martial music—PADILLA's Captain rushes in with the Banner of Castile and waves it over the Queen—The room becomes full of Officers and Soldiers.*

PADILLA.

See the flag

Of your Castile!

JOANNA.

I bless it. Let the gates  
Be thrown wide open ; let my subjects throng  
My palace, and approve me while I swear  
To reign for them.

*[In a pause of the shouts the distant music of the Cathedral organ is heard.]*

JOANNA.

Pray you one moment—hush—  
Those sounds refresh my thirsty soul—forgive me—  
Thank God I weep again !

*[Members of the Holy Junta enter and kneel to the QUEEN  
—Shouts renewed.]*

PADILLA.

The Holy Junta  
Who have preserved your kingdoms, claim your  
blessing.

JOANNA.

They have it ; I must ask their wisdom's aid  
To teach me how to rule.

*[ALPHONSO bears to JOANNA the Sceptre of Aragon.]*

PADILLA.

The holy sceptre  
Of Aragon.



JOANNA (*taking it*).

Yes; this at Saragossa

I swore to wield in mercy, when I deem'd it  
A gorgeous plaything. I will keep that oath.

[MONDEIAR brings forward the Banner of Toledo; and  
is about to lay it at JOANNA'S feet.

PADILLA.

The Delegate from your own Toledo lays  
Its banner at your feet.

JOANNA.

No; let it float  
On the proud air—the banner of my birthplace,  
That I may hail its star of gold that flash'd  
Upon me in my infancy with hope  
Of grandeur now fulfill'd.

[MONDEIAR waves the Banner of Toledo.

Beloved Toledo—

Your Queen shall fill you with her state!—for there  
I'll fix my Court. Meanwhile behold my general

[To PADILLA.

To whom I trust my armies; my chief lady

[To MARIA.

Who shall direct my household.

[PADILLA and MARIA kneel on each side of the Queen,  
and kiss her hands—Soldiers and Citizens pour in  
—the organ swells into triumphant music—banners  
are waved in different parts of the Saloon.

JOANNA *stands in the front with her hands clasped and  
exclaims*

Mother, bend  
From your eternal seat to reign with me!

[*The drop-scene falls.*]

## ACT IV.

A Month is supposed to elapse between the Third and Fourth Acts.

The Scenes of the Fourth Act lie throughout in Toledo.



## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Antechamber in the Alcazar of Toledo, now the Palace of the QUEEN JOANNA; in the middle of the back-scene folding doors guarded by Sentinels.*

*Enter DONNA MARIA—she attempts to pass.*

MARIA.

GIVE me free passage to the Queen.

SENTINEL.

My orders

Preclude all passage.

MARIA.

Orders! who dares give them?

Who has empower'd you to deny to me,

Wife of the Queen's Commander, while he sweeps

Her foes before him, leave to pay her service?

SENTINEL.

Don Giron has directed that none pass,

Save those who bear a summons to the council  
The Queen this hour will hold.

MARIA.

The Queen hold council !  
Do'st mean that Giron represents the Queen  
Fit to embody royal will in acts ?  
I must pass to her.

SENTINEL.

Giron comes ; if he  
Accord you access, I shall gladly yield it.

*Enter* GIRON.

MARIA.

You are well met, Don Giron, to assure me  
If, by your order, I am denied free way  
To attend my royal mistress ?

GIRON.

Yes.—When trifles  
Of womanly observance claim your aid  
You shall have leave to render it ; this hour  
The state requires the Queen's unruffled wisdom ;  
And I must pray you to defer attendance  
Till graver duties be fulfill'd.

MARIA.

O mockery  
Of council! Well you know her mournful spirit,  
Expanded for awhile by generous warmth,  
Has closed in foldings that admit no access  
To knowledge of state matters; and you seize  
The moment when the afflicted sense has shrunk  
Most deeply into gloom, and when the chief  
Whose accents might recal it, is detain'd  
By duty from her court, to practise on her  
Some most ignoble treachery.

GIRON.

I respect  
Your privilege to rail; but weightier cares  
Oblige me to entreat you wait my leisure  
For apt reply.

*Enter Soldier.*

SOLDIER.

The general just arrived  
Desires to see Don Giron.

MARIA.

My dear husband?

GIRON.

Tell him his lady waits, and though I wish  
A speedy conference with him on state matters,  
I will not mar their meeting.

[Exit Soldier.]

Farewell, lady,  
Soon you will know me better.

MARIA.

Know thee better—

No, Giron; I may see thy giant webs  
Immesh our fortunes in their threads, or crush'd  
To atoms by an honest hand's chance grasp,  
But for the soul that weaves them, no event  
Can show it clearer.

*Enter PADILLA.*MARIA (*embracing him*).

What delight to clasp you  
After four weary weeks of absence, cheer'd  
Only by such dim knowledge of your triumphs  
As rumour bore!

PADILLA.

Have you received no letters?  
Oh wicked craft!—But tell me of your charge,  
In which I live or die—how fares the Queen?



## MARIA.

Alas! there lies our grief. The courtly grace  
With which she bless'd your banners when we parted  
Shone through that evening's festival and charm'd  
Her wondering guests; and during the five days  
She after spent in Avila, her carriage  
Remain'd most noble; though sometimes she sat  
Abstracted, as if truant fancies play'd  
With distant things as present, if a word  
Reminded her of regal state, her soul  
Collected in a moment all its strength  
And started into majesty. She seem'd  
Rapt in delicious musing through the journey  
Thence to this city of her youth, and vow'd,  
Before she sought repose to pay her thanks  
In that august Cathedral where the Church  
Embraced her soul in Baptism. As she kneel'd  
Before the venerable font, her face  
Shone with soft ecstasy, which so possess'd  
Her frame in its composure, that men gazed  
In awe, as if a bodiless spirit shed  
Celestial thoughts among them. When we reach'd  
This palace of her infancy, wild change  
Came over her; she bounded with delight

Like that of a young peasant girl return'd  
Home from first service and array'd as queen  
Of village feast ; now she some relic kiss'd  
Of baby times : now burst out into sobs  
Mingled with laughter ; last in vivid speech  
Told of august Columbus and the birds  
Of dazzling colours that he brought from realms  
Far westward, till her fancy seem'd to ache  
With its own splendour, and, worn out, she slept  
The gentle sleep of childhood ; whence, alas !  
She woke still more estranged.

PADILLA.

Did she not sit  
Queen of the tournament our city held  
In honour of her coming ?

MARIA.

As an image  
Shaped by the sculptor in unconscious semblance  
Of majesty ; her soul but once awoke  
From heaviest dreaming ;—when the conqueror kneel'd  
Before her for his crown, a smile as faint  
As sparkle that the moon's young crescent casts  
On stedfast water circled on her face

In flickering sweetness. Never has she sat  
In council till this hour, when Giron dares  
Usurp her name for summons.

PADILLA.

So dissolves  
The snow-wreath which I thought a sacred band  
To gird our cause! Giron has stamp'd her seal  
On orders which have drawn away my soldiers,  
Troop after troop, till I was left as bare  
As a thick grove in winter, sadly deck'd  
By some few desperate friends that like dank leaves,  
Which, in their fluttering yellow, cleave through rain  
And frost to moss-clad boughs, would not forsake me;  
But I would stand alone against the world  
If my Queen's soul were clear.

*Enter Soldier.*

SOLDIER.

My lord, the troops  
The Regent has combined, in mighty force,  
Advance upon Toledo.

PADILLA.

Who commands them?

SOLDIER.

'Tis said the Count de Haro.

PADILLA.

A great captain—

How many soldiers have we near Toledo ?

SOLDIER.

The Junta's troops—

PADILLA.

The Junta's—say the Queen's.

SOLDIER.

I rather should say Giron's, for his friends  
Command each band, and all obey his orders ;  
They number scarce six thousand.

PADILLA.

Tell Don Giron

That I await him here.

SOLDIER.

My lord—

PADILLA.

Obey me,

Or my own sword shall teach you duty ; surely  
I am your general still.

SOLDIER.

My lord, he comes.

PADILLA.

Leave us ; and you, my love, withdraw awhile ;  
I must unmask the traitor.

MARIA.

Smite him down

With one proud look of goodness.

[*Exit* MARIA.]*Enter* GIRON.

GIRON.

Welcome home !

PADILLA.

Before I take your greeting, answer me ;  
Why, while our enemies remain unquell'd,  
Were all my veteran soldiers order'd hither  
And officer'd afresh ? Why was I left  
To learn, on chanced return, what dim report  
Had scarce suggested, that an army raised  
To sweep the Queen's battalions from Castile  
Bursts on Toledo ?

GIRON.

I shall make reply  
To no one save the Queen, from whom I hold

Supreme commission to command the troops  
And curb the citizens,—and with it hold  
The right to counsel you to seek the shelter  
Your neighbouring mansion offers.

PADILLA.

Am I awake ?

Commission from the Queen ? Supreme commission ?  
The power to bid me shrivel into sloth  
While the war thunders ? No ; some desperate fraud  
Gives semblance of authority to wrong  
That passes fancy.

GIRON (*showing a scroll*).

There is my commission ;  
Gaze on it ; you will find it bears true impress.

PADILLA.

The same that drew my soldiers from my camp  
To wait your orders, but 'twas not impress'd  
By the Queen's will ; I'll learn this very instant,  
From her own lips, if her most noble nature  
Sanction this deed.

GIRON.

She is reposing now ;  
You cannot see her.

PADILLA.

This atrocious scroll  
Bears date this day ; if she could do this act  
She can avow it. Sentinels, make way—  
He bleeds who stops me.

[PADILLA *rushes past the Sentinels through the folding doors.*

GIRON (*alone*).

Go—you will find her lips  
Quivering with Giron's name if I have train'd  
Her feeble sense aright ; else they'll be dumb.

*Enter a Captain of GIRON's guard.*

CAPTAIN.

My lord, the Regent's army like a flood  
Pours down the black declivities that front  
The northern gate ; your soldiers stand in arms,  
Impatient for their leader.

GIRON.

He is ready—

My armour ! (*Calling.*)

[GIRON'S Squire *enters with his armour, and arms him while he speaks.*

Do my captains hold the posts  
I order'd ?

CAPTAIN.

All is as you wish.

GIRON (*speaking in great excitement*).

How light

This armour sits ! Methinks the blood that springs  
From Spain's remotest heroes never rush'd  
Through any of my glorious ancestors  
With such triumphant prophesy as now  
It swells in mine. My horse—my noblest horse—  
Is he attired for war ?

CAPTAIN.

At the Alcazar gate

In conscious pomp he waits you.

GIRON.

Glorious steed !

I have reserved thy mettle for this conflict,  
Which shall avenge us both on restless hours  
When, in the gentleness of arrowy speed,  
I have felt thy hidden valour under me,  
And known thee panting for a leader's form  
Thou shalt soon carry—for thy master comes  
No slight lieutenant, but a chief to win  
An empire in thy saddle.



*Enter PADILLA with the scroll.*

GIRON.

May I take

My Queen's commission ?

PADILLA (*giving the scroll*).

Take it ; by what spell,

What wicked blandishment, you snared her sense

I know not ; but her lips, when I implored

That she would name her general, murmur'd—Giron ;

Take it—my life goes with it.

GIRON.

Seek your home—

I will protect it.

PADILLA.

You ?

GIRON.

Yes—I—

Before this night shall fall, your slow-won glories

Shall pale before the triumphs that await

Castile's first son in arms. I feel them crown me !

[*Exit GIRON followed by the CAPTAIN.*

PADILLA.

Yet stay !—I would have pray'd to serve beneath you !

May God protect the brave men you command  
From swift destruction !

*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA.

What has Giron dared ?

PADILLA.

His daring is made legitimate ; he holds  
The Queen's commission superseding mine,  
And has gone forth to lead our mortal conflict  
Against the Regent.

MARIA.

You'll not suffer it—  
Joanna means it not.

PADILLA.

Alas ! I sought her  
And in such tremulous accents as my ear,  
Attent with agony could catch, she gave  
The monstrous parchment sanction.

MARIA.

Trample on it !

Proclaim it filch'd by most unrighteous practice  
From a distracted mind which God absolves  
From reason's duty !

PADILLA.

Never; I staked all—

My life, my honour, my dear country's peace,  
On the Queen's waken'd spirit; with her title  
Graced the wild tumults of the crowd, and made  
Rebellion consecrate: and while a thread  
Of consciousness within her soul can shape  
A mandate, I will honour it as law  
Announced by voice of angel.

MARIA.

Is it so?

You were not made for times like these.

PADILLA.

Not made

For any time Maria, but for life  
Of which this is the threshold whence the gates  
Of the eternal open. Hark! the streets  
Are throng'd with battle. *[Loud tumult without.]*

*Enter MONDEIAR.*

PADILLA.

Brother, you see how wildly  
Change courses over us in this slight world,  
For, in a little fragment of an hour,

You find me stripp'd of station, trust, command,  
By arts of Giron.

MONDEIAR.

This same hour has brought  
Deep retribution. Giron, drunk with joy  
Of base success, impell'd the unsteady soldiers  
Whom he had parcell'd out to silken captains,  
Blindly against the Regent's troops, who, wing'd  
With impulse from the mountain, broke their lines  
At the first charge; they fled, and left our gates  
Free to the victors, who are rushing through them  
To threaten the Alcazar. Hark! They come!

PADILLA.

The spoilers in Toledo! sword, come forth;  
I ask no warrant now to draw thee!

[Draws.

(To MARIA.) Dearest,

Attend the Queen; keep from her ear the crime  
And anguish of this hour. Ancestral city,  
I will deliver thee or die!

[PADILLA rushes out, followed by MONDEIAR—tumult continues.

MARIA (*alone*).

In arms!

Heaven only grant that he remain in arms,

Sustain this righteous impulse of his valour,  
And let what men call Fortune hurl its blows  
Madly against us.

*Enter Sentinel.*

SENTINEL.

Lady, we are betray'd ;  
While at the Northern Gate the battle raged,  
A band of soldiers through the Alcazar's portal  
That opens on the Tagus, left unbarr'd  
By treachery as I think, with furtive steps,  
Found entrance to the chamber where the treasures  
Of regal state lie heap'd, and thence approach  
The person of the Queen ; I have no force  
To meet them—pray you fly.

MARIA.

“Fly,” saidst thou, craven ?  
My place is with my Queen.

SENTINEL.

Oh that our captains  
Had mettle such as yours !

MARIA.

No speech—come with me.

*[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—*The great Square before the Cathedral of Toledo ;  
Citizens flying up the steps of the Cathedral followed by  
Soldiers in confusion.*

*Enter PADILLA, with sword drawn.*

PADILLA.

Turn, recreants, or my sword shall make you know  
The coward's peril worst. Do my eyes dazzle,  
Or is there a plumed officer who shares  
This shameful flight ?

*[Seizes VILLENA in the crowd.]*

I'll give thee judgment here—

Die !

VILLENA.

Have mercy, brave Padilla !

PADILLA.

Faugh ! Villena—

Thou art not worthy such a death, and thus  
I fling thee back again to reptile being—  
Live, craven gamester !

*[Flings VILLENA from him.]*

I will waste no breath  
On soldiers train'd in arms—let them fly on

And cowering wait with yonder palsied wretch  
The conqueror's lash. Craftsmen of brave Toledo,  
Through whose stout hearts these glory-cinctured  
towers

Have shed the mighty thoughts of ages, guard them  
With your rude weapons ! Do not seek for swords ;  
And if you have no axe or bludgeon, use  
The naked energy of arms grown strong  
From weakness they have circled, to defend  
Your wives and sisters stricken dumb with fear  
Of woes they dare not shape,— and strike with me !

[PADILLA *rushes out, followed by the People.*

SCENE III.—*The Antechamber of the Alcazar, as before.*

*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA (*alone*).

Snatch'd from us in a moment, with her reason  
Darken'd for this life ! Melancholy Queen,  
Why wert thou startled from thy world of dreams  
To emptier mockeries.

*Enter MONDEIAR.*

MONDEIAR.

Is the Queen safe ?

MARIA.

Gone,—

And all the regal gauds.

MONDEIAR.

Sad chance ! Padilla,

Turning the tide of battle through the streets,  
Caught an uncertain rumour from the crowd  
Of danger menacing the Queen, and sent me  
Hither to shield her.



MARIA.

Giron's treacherous art  
Has miss'd its aim, but in its failure, given  
Our royal lady to the conqueror's grasp,  
Which will consign her to a living tomb  
Whence never voice shall issue.

*Enter Soldier.*

SOLDIER.

Our city's saved ;  
Its streets are freed from spoilers, and its gates  
Secured and sentinell'd ; beyond all's lost.  
Don Giron, when surrounded, madly spurr'd  
His fiery courser up the rocky steeps  
Which boldest climbers shun ; and though his horse  
Leap'd with heroic rage from crag to crag,  
Striking strange fire that flash'd beneath his hoofs  
Like lightning, near the topmost ridge the steed,  
Trampling on slender ledge that shiver'd, fell ;  
And the infuriate general of an hour  
Lies crush'd beneath him.

*[Exit Soldier.]*

MARIA.

Then my husband stands

Supreme, alone, and from the cloud of treachery  
The hero shall emerge !

*Enter TENDILLA and Captains.*

TENDILLA.

Is Padilla yet  
Return'd from victory ?

MARIA.

Not yet; he stops not  
While any toils of nobleness remain  
To count those done.

TENDILLA.

We'll heap new honours on him ;  
Giron is dead ; our foes command the heights  
A furlong from our gates, and our sole hope  
Is his consent to lead us.

MARIA.

He shall give it.  
Will all the troops acknowledge him as leader,  
Sole and supreme ?

TENDILLA.

All who from martial virtue  
Require the sense of honour, will be proud

Frankly to lay aside all claims for duty  
To him in whose clear sovereignty of soul  
They place implicit trust ; but there are veterans  
With sinews firm and courage nicely temper'd  
By discipline and use, who want the touch  
Of valour's generous impulse ; these complain  
Of long arrears of pay, and will not serve  
Without some present largess.

MARIA.

I have jewels.

Take and divide them. Could I coin my life-blood,  
How gladly would I pour it forth to win  
Padilla means of glory !

TENDILLA.

Noble lady,

If the imparadised spirits of our saints  
Now read the generous promptings of your soul,  
How must they wish the treasures of their shrines  
Devoted to sustain them !

MARIA.

True—the shrines—

I'll make it piety to borrow thence  
Aid for this mighty need. Padilla comes—

No word to him, if you would have him yours,  
Of the base hirelings' claims, or of the treasures  
Which, well I know, he would not touch in thought  
To win earth's throne ; for he holds endless ruin  
Lies in such sacrilege.

*Enter PADILLA.*

PADILLA.

Has danger reach'd  
The person of the Queen ?

MARIA.

She is borne hence  
By soldiers who, it seems, found noiseless entrance  
Through treachery of her guards.

PADILLA.

Did she endure  
The outrage tamely ? Did no flashing rage  
Confound the traitors ?

MARIA.

No ; I flung my arms  
Around her, and conjured the men who throng'd  
Her chamber to retire, and saw them falter  
A moment in their purpose. Then her eyes,  
Which had been glazed in vacant dulness, swam

In sad affection for me ; but they caught  
The blaze of jewels in the sceptre raised  
Before her couch, and flicker'd into joy  
Weak as the pleasure which a toy awakes  
In a sick infant. So she pass'd away  
Smiling and silent, with the glittering symbols  
Of majesty around her, which the robbers  
Obsequious bore. Alas ! her reason's sunk  
Into a slumber which will break no more  
Till seraph harps disperse it.

PADILLA (*flinging down his sword*).

There—lie there—  
My sword has lost its sovereign ; it has won  
Toledo's freedom from this night's foul ravage,  
And shall be drawn no more.

MARIA.

It shall be drawn  
To save Castile ; you have no rival left ;  
Giron is dead.

PADILLA.

Dead—rival—how these sounds  
Expound each other ! Rivalry with us

Was but a race for death, which Giron wins  
A little foremost.

TENDILLA.

All the Captains, moved  
By one strong impulse, in our utmost need,  
Pray you to lead the troops.

PADILLA.

Against my king?  
No refuge left—no thin disguise—to veil  
The front of treason?

MONDEIAR.

You already wear  
Its ban; for Charles himself pronounces all  
Who join'd this quarrel traitors, and his Regent  
Who in the councils of the camp presides,  
By this day's proclamation, offers pardon,  
Treasure, and honour, and release of captives,  
To any who shall bring you to atone  
Treason with instant death.

PADILLA.

I have long felt  
My course would have this issue, and long musings

Have braced me to endure it ; I am ready ;  
My work on earth is done.

MARIA.

Think upon us !

MONDEIAR.

Think of the sacred things these walls enfold,  
Huge relics of Art's infancy that speak  
The great Castilian soul before the Saracen  
Struggling from dense barbaric gloom to make  
Valour and beauty deathless ; tombs that breathe  
Of deeds unchronicled, and marbles worn  
By kneeling saints, in which our fathers traced  
Old martyrdoms and crowns ! Before you drop  
The sword that rescued these from this day's rapine  
Guess the triumphant insults of to-morrow !

TENDILLA.

Feel for the citizens of your famed birthplace  
And peasants born in neighbouring fields now shelter'd  
Beneath its towers, who drink their native air  
With prouder joy because your childhood breathed it ;  
Men who so prized your fame that when you gave  
Adhesion to our enterprise, embraced it,

Asking no reason for the strife which one  
So loved thought righteous—who, if now forsaken  
By him they trusted, must endure the doom  
The Regent threatens.

PADILLA.

What ?

TENDILLA.

His order runs  
That one of every ten who took arms with you,  
Chosen by lot, shall on the gibbet die ;  
While public scourging, dealt by soldiers' arms  
Brand the more cursed survivors—for the crime  
Of thinking you their father !

PADILLA.

Have I done this ?  
O passion wing'd to pierce a state's repose  
How little, at the moment, seems the touch  
That breaks the placid water, and how vast  
The eddies that sweep round it ! I cannot leave  
Those who so trusted me, but will win peace  
For them, or perish with them. I accept  
The post you offer ; let me have an hour



For household cares, and I will order all things  
For one great sally.

TENDILLA.

I shall cheer the hearts  
Of thousands with this news.

(*Aside to MARIA.*) Lady, the rest

We trust to you.

MARIA.

Fear not.

[*Exit TENDILLA and Captain.*]

My noble husband,

Let me embrace you with a heart more proud  
Than yet has leap'd to yours. You stand apart  
In your own majesty, a tower of refuge  
Which beams from Heaven illumine.

PADILLA.

Say I stand

Upon the arid sands a desolate mark  
For the next lightning ; look I as of yore ?  
Lives in my voice one old familiar tone ?  
I am all rebel now.

MARIA.

No, true ; most true  
To your own greatness and your country's need.

Alphonso seeks us ; do not cloud his spirit  
With your unjust misgivings.

PADILLA.

You are right ;  
I will not mar the precious gift of youth  
To know disaster only when it strikes,  
Not when it threatens.

*Enter ALPHONSO.*

PADILLA.

My dear son, we left  
Your birthday feast untasted ; we'll renew it ;  
We four are join'd again, and we'll ensure  
One hour of lone-fraught comfort. From the ramparts,  
Where I will have our evening banquet spread,  
We shall behold the flowering shrubs that droop'd  
Over our household feasts. That sunset time  
In which our old domestic joys were shatter'd  
When foulest outrage summon'd me to arm,  
Returns with heavenly lustre that bespeaks  
Its golden peace. Mondeiar, inform the captains  
Soon after sunset, I will ask their aid  
To fix the morning's battle ; then come to us.

[*Exit MONDEIAR.*

Each pathway of our garden lives before me,

In such distinct reality, that sense  
Like that of touch embraces it, and sunbeams  
That burst triumphant through yon watery clouds  
Will pierce the woods that shade it, till we seem  
To wander through the glades, and feel the arm  
About the waist, and head in sport reclined  
Upon the shoulder; come we must not lose  
A moment of this hour; its glory deepens!

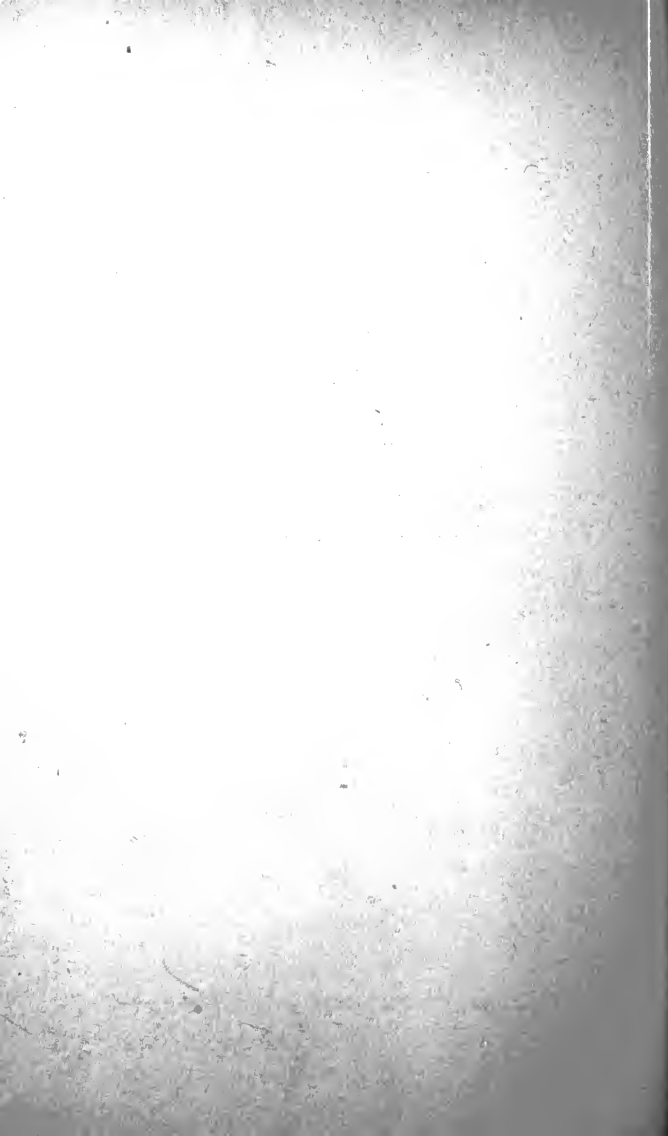
[*Exeunt.*]



## ACT V.

A Night is supposed to elapse between the Fourth and Fifth Acts.

The Scenes of this Act lie in the city and neighbourhood of Toledo.



## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Battlements of the Alcazar of Toledo.—  
Stormy Sunrise.*

*Enter PADILLA, followed by FLORIO.*

PADILLA.

Not here! Maria stole away at dawn,  
And I have search'd for her in vain to win  
One word of comfort e'er I go to battle;  
Boy, have you seen your mistress?

[*Seeing FLORIO.*

FLORIO.

She went forth,  
And, as I heard, met other noble ladies  
Bent on some pious care.

PADILLA.

Heaven bless her in it!  
How happy am I that, 'midst fortune's storms,  
My little household, morticed in the rock

That shall outlast the visible world, uplifts  
A pinnacle that, on its slender summit,  
Reflects unrisen dawn ! Yet I'd not miss  
Maria's valiant smile. Run with best speed,  
And pray her join me on this height made dear  
By last night's feast.

[*Exit FLORIO.*]

Those ponderous clouds that drew  
An awful splendour from last evening's sun  
Spread now a black pavilion, where the storm  
Waits to make noon-tide terrible.

*Enter ALPHONSO.*

PADILLA.

My son,

I must inquire at last, are you prepared  
For orphan'd ruin, which this battle lost  
Must bring on your young head ? You look serene  
As if on some heroic pastime bent,  
Contemplating its prize.

ALPHONSO.

Such a desire  
Throbs in my eager heart, and hopeful waits  
My father's sanction.



PADILLA.

What have I to grant  
Except my prayers ?

ALPHONSO.

The noblest of all boons,  
Your leave to fight beside you.

PADILLA.

And so risk  
The only treasure of a doom'd man's widow !

ALPHONSO.

Oh do not speak so sadly ! How the tales  
Which you made bright with shapes of boyish valour,  
While at your knee I stood, reproach me now !  
Can I forget how children of the house  
Of the great Marquis of Cadiz achieved  
Scars from the infidel, e'er thirteen summers  
Flush'd in their cheeks ? How King Alphonso's heir  
At tenderer age, with eager heart, exchanged  
The rare felicities of princely youth  
For arid battle, and, expiring, strove  
To trace in bloody dust consoling words  
Whence might be sent assurance to his home  
That he died happy ? These, and dearer tales,

Which veterans oft with swimming eyes have told me,  
Of your own deeds before you reached my age,  
Proclaim me laggard.

PADILLA.

If with cheerful heart  
I went to this day's battle, you should share it ;  
But this will be my last.

ALPHONSO.

And should it be,  
Let me not miss the last occasion left me ;  
How shall I ever mix in glorious war  
Without one living lesson from my father ?

PADILLA.

Are you prepared to die ?

ALPHONSO.

I think I am—  
Perhaps more fit than if my age were riper.

PADILLA.

Have your desire ; go to the priest who offers  
Prayers for us in the chapel ; make confession  
As for your dying hour—it will not need  
To hold him long ; then hither bring the sword

I gave to you for sport, and I will gird it,  
And we will go together.

ALPHONSO.

Thank you, father ;

I'll prove no hindrance.

[*Exit ALPHONSO.*]

PADILLA.

He has chosen bravely,  
And has a right to choose, for on his life  
Lies nothing that should make death fearful.

[*Shouts from the city.*]

Shouts—

Hollow and wreckless—

In their pause I hear  
A deep, low ponderous sound,—the very sound  
Of the cathedral's funeral bell when heard  
On yonder mountains through the evening air  
In far-off years.

[*Shouts renewed.*]

Those clamours surely rise  
From some unhallow'd revel :—dreadful pleasure  
At such a crisis !

*Enter FLORIO.*

PADILLA.

Whence are those wild shouts ?  
What means that funeral knell ?

FLORIO.

I heard no knell ;  
The shouts rise from the veteran bands who share  
Among them heaps of gold and gems dispersed  
From the cathedral's chapels.

PADILLA.

From the shrines ?  
The treasures dedicate to Heaven profaned  
To pay my soldiers ! Who has pull'd this curse  
On my last struggle ! Tell me, that my sword  
May deal swift justice on the guilty ! Speak !  
I see you know the robbers—do not shiver—  
But speak, if you would live.

FLORIO.

A train of ladies  
Attired in shroud-like vestments, moving slow  
With spectral pageantry and saddest music  
Besought the saints to pity and forgive  
A deed compell'd by such sad urgency  
As will assure its pardon.

PADILLA (*grasping his sword*).

Urgency !

How durst you—

FLORIO (*kneeling*).

Spare me—I have meant no ill.

PADILLA.

No ill!—Stand up—You meant no ill—alas!  
So soon corrupted by the sophist world  
To use its basest words! You think those treasures  
Which fatal sacrilege has rifled, shows  
For idle gazers—nay perhaps have learn'd  
To hold the honor'd dead who heap'd them fools  
Thus to bestow their wealth beyond return  
Of mortal use. Oh child! They are the offerings  
Which prodigality of boundless love  
And grateful adoration, wanting words  
For utterance, sought amidst the precious things  
Earth holds, to speak in beauty to the future;  
And on each gift a radiant angel waits  
To guard devotion's symbol! I must fight,  
By these abandon'd!—you beheld the spoilers—  
Who led them? Answer—or my sword shall search  
That quivering heart—speak!—I implore you, speak!  
Say—it was not——Oh mercy!

[*Shouts renewed.*]

*Enter MARIA.*

PADILLA.

Can it be?

You have no portion in this impious daring?—  
Say so and bless me!

MARIA.

I have acted boldly  
In firm belief that pardon will attend  
A deed which brings the treasures of the saints  
To aid a cause which, living, they had died for.

PADILLA.

So! I am alone; there is a gulf divides us—  
All lost!

MARIA.

How lost?

PADILLA.

For this world; but that's little;  
I thought till now, however lapsed in duty  
To my anointed sovereign, I maintain'd  
My fealty to Heaven's eternal Law  
And Him who sits beyond it;—that is gone—  
And death's no refuge.

MARIA (*kneeling*).

Kill me here, and live  
Assoil'd from guilt my desperate love brings on thee!

Do not transfix me with those eyes of stone,  
But slay me !

PADILLA.

Slay ! who spoke that dreadful word ?  
Slay ! you should live for ages to implore  
The saints for pardon ! Slay ! That word means death ;  
And, in that death, which I esteem'd a haven  
Of golden rest, the shadow of this hour  
Will follow with its vengeance.

MARIA.

Then divorce me ;

Sever your lot from mine ; if I have sinn'd  
Beyond forgiveness, cast me off, and keep  
Your right to blessing,—so you let me kiss  
Your hand once more, and hear one gentle word  
Before we part for ever.

PADILLA.

No, Maria,

I will not separate my lot from your's,  
Here or hereafter. Rise, and look with love  
Upon your blasted husband.

MARIA.

Blasted ! Spurn me.

PADILLA (*raising and embracing MARIA*).

No ; thus, once more, I join my soul with yours  
For ever. I remember when we stood  
Before the Priest to consecrate the state  
In which the holiest ecstasy of earth  
Enriches the immortal, and exchanged  
The common vow of constancy "till death  
Should part us," which gay brides and bridegrooms  
take

And keep without reproach till parting comes  
According to the word, and then forget  
Their loss in other contracts which they seal  
With the same brief formality, and pass  
In decent round of duty, till the grave  
Sets the survivor free to wed again,  
As if the marriage of pure hearts had bonds  
For mortal life alone ; I felt your hand,  
Which had been tremulous in mine, grow firm  
And your eye flash'd a question on my soul  
Which from that soul I answer'd,—with disdain  
Of the poor limitation of a span  
For such great bargain, and a pledge that ours  
Was for both worlds. I own that bond and pray  
That I may share your doom.



MARIA.

I cannot weep,

For my heart's iron.

PADILLA.

Do you not hear a knell

As from a distant church ?

MARIA.

No—any sound

Were better than the silence.

PADILLA.

A funeral knell ;

Yet softer than before you came : its portent  
Seems fraught with solemn mercy.

*[Enter ALPHONSO gaily, with a helmet on, and sword in his hand.]*

ALPHONSO.

I am ready ;

The troops wait in the Square.

PADILLA *(to MARIA)*.

He goes with me.

MARIA.

Oh not to-day !—

PADILLA.

Hold !—not a word to him.

MARIA.

Oh not to-day ; all things in earth and sky  
Are charged with terror ; see the river's mists  
Rise like huge shrouds to veil your battle-field  
And the air's fill'd with storm.

PADILLA.

We must abide it ;  
My army will to-morrow be dissolved  
Unless to-day it conquers.

*[Girding the sword on ALPHONSO.]*

Let me arm you ;  
The sword fits well ; embrace your mother.

*[ALPHONSO kisses MARIA, who stands abstracted.]*

ALPHONSO.

Cold

As marble ! Do not fear for me ; I go  
To win my knighthood.

MARIA.

Go—I dare not bless you.

PADILLA (*embracing MARIA*).

Farewell, my dear one ; let me see you smile ;  
That's well ; be hopeful. Now, young soldier, tread  
With lightest foot, for there's no freer heart

In all the thousands that share this day's peril  
Than that you carry.

[*Exeunt PADILLA and ALPHONSO.—Trumpets below sound a salute.*]

MARIA (*alone*).

Gone—those trumpets greet them—  
Time rushes to its cataract.

[*Looking over the battlements on thick mists rising from the Tagus.*]

Part, clouds,  
And let me see the squadrons of our foes  
To mate these phantoms of despair!  
[*Lightning.*  
That flash

Came at my call to show in jagged fire  
The plumes down-pouring from the mountain brow  
And streaming swords.

[*Lightning.*]

Another flash—they are gone—  
Already in the narrow vale where Death  
Is busy, while the tempest veils his work.  
Oh for a moment's glance of yonder conflict  
The mists conceal, or for one battle sound  
Above the thunder!

[*Storm rages nearer.*]

*Enter LOPEZ.*

LOPEZ.

Madam, will you seek

The chapel where the Friar with ceaseless prayer  
Implores the Saints to aid us.

MARIA.

Saints! I am barr'd  
From intercession of the martyr'd dead  
And from all sacred roofs; but here, in right  
Of my remorse and wretchedness, I cry  
To the bare Heaven for succour!

LOPEZ.

Yet descend—  
The winds impel a deluge which will sweep  
In a few moments hither.

MARIA.

Let it come,  
And wrap me in its fury.

LOPEZ.

As my master pass'd  
He pray'd me, as if life hung on the word,  
To urge you to take shelter; and my hand  
Prest as in final parting.

[Weeps.]

MARIA.

Good old servant—

You weep ; I thank you ; for your tears dissolve  
The iron at my heart, and bid it yield  
Obedience to its lord. Lead where you please.

*[Exit MARIA and LOPEZ. Storm continues.]*

SCENE II.—*The Tent of the REGENT ADRIAN pitched on the eminence of the first Scene of the Second Act.—Storm raging.*

*The REGENT and GONSALVO.*

ADRIAN.

The elements fight for us, but is it certain  
That they will conquer? If the battle hangs  
In doubt, I'll not be absent from the field,  
But brave the tempest.

GONSALVO.

Be assured, Lord Cardinal,  
Of such a victory as shall quench for ever  
The smouldering embers of revolt: the veterans,  
Struck by the loss of the distracted Queen,  
Whose presence gilded treason, deem the storm,  
That dash'd against them at their onset, wing'd  
By Heaven to scourge rebellion, and forsake  
The accursed banners to accept the pardon  
Your mercy offers; while Toledo's craftsmen,  
Though stout of heart, unused to war, will falter,  
Confused by double terrors.

ADRIAN.

Yet I'll go forth—

The storm subsides.

GONSALVO.

Here's one whose news may solve  
All doubts.

*Enter Soldier.*

GONSALVO.

How stands the battle?

SOLDIER.

'Tis a flight—

When the storm burst in fury from the heights  
And our ranks swept down with it, panic seized  
Padilla's choicest soldiers, and they fled  
Or cried for quarter, while the heroic craftsmen  
Struggling with desperate valour at his call  
To flank us towards the mountain, in the marsh  
That stretches eastward at the Tagus side,  
Sinking knee-deep, were captured, or endured  
Our swords unflinching.

ADRIAN.

Do you bring me news

Of the arch-rebel, in whose death alone  
This treason will expire ?

SOLDIER.

No—but the offer  
Of pardon his betrayer may assure  
For many traitors, with great largess, scatter'd  
By spies among the quailing troops, must bring  
Padilla to your judgment.

ADRIAN.

Judgment is pass'd—  
That he, and chiefs who fought with him, shall die  
Within an hour of capture. Let the block  
Be planted on the loftiest rock that stands  
Direct before Toledo, that their deaths  
May freeze the hearts they snared.

*[Trumpets without.]*

Those sounds proclaim  
Our victory complete ; their blood shall seal it.

*[Exeunt.]*



SCENE III.—*A Hall in the Alcazar of Toledo.*—PADILLA  
*enters hastily, throws his helmet on a table, and sits*  
*beside it.*

PADILLA.

All lost except these walls, which scarce will hold  
For time to breathe and die! But where's my son—  
He was unharm'd beside me at the gate  
When I protected the last gallant craftsmen  
That sought its shelter;—is he left without?  
Or here before me? Grant me strength to ask—  
Within there!

*Enter FLORIO.*

PADILLA.

Is he here?

FLORIO.

Who?

PADILLA.

Who! my boy—

I mean Alphonso.

FLORIO.

I have not beheld him,

But at the gate, a wounded soldier prays  
That you would hear his tidings, which, I think,  
Are of your son.

PADILLA.

Let him be tended hither :

Now God grant courage !

[CARILLO is brought in, wearing the uniform of a common  
soldier, supported.]

You have tidings for me ;  
You are hurt—you are sinking—what a wretch am I  
To torture you with question ! Yet I implore you  
Utter one word—what know you of my son ?

CARILLO.

I am most happy that I caught these wounds  
In warding from his brow the swords that flash'd  
Around it, and so saved him.

PADILLA.

Then he lives ?

CARILLO.

Lives, but borne captive.

PADILLA.

To the camp of Adrian !  
Worse fate ! yet let me not be thankless to thee !

I saw thee stem the flying crowd with valour  
Which, shared by chieftains' hearts, had changed the  
fortune  
Of this last combat ; what's thy name ?

CARILLO.

'Tis mangled.

PADILLA.

I know thee now ; thou art the youth Carillo  
Who bore my censure ; well hast thou redeem'd  
Thy honor ; oh that thou mayst live ! Help ! Help !

CARILLO.

I die contented with thy praise ; may Heaven  
Preserve and bless thee !

*[He is borne out.]*

PADILLA.

Be thy frailties pardon'd !

My child in Adrian's power ! Most cruel duty  
That chains me to my station when my life,  
With its last desperate energy, might serve  
To win his freedom ! Yet I must not leave  
The dreadful post I fill, whatever agonies  
Burn midst my heartstrings. I must suffer in it  
Till death release me.

*Enter OVANDO, hastily.*

OVANDO.

Do you hear the cry  
That rends the city?

PADILLA.

No; what cry?

OVANDO.

For you;

The crowd, in terror's frenzy, call for him  
Who led them forth to slaughter; they will see you.

PADILLA.

How—what said you?

OVANDO.

That the infuriate people  
Demand your presence.

PADILLA.

I obey their call:  
Forgive me; I was for a moment lost;  
My son is——yonder.

OVANDO.

Captive?

PADILLA.

So.

OVANDO.

I am heartstruck ;

I was too rude.

PADILLA.

Not so ; I have no right

To muse on private grief.

*Enter TENDILLA.*

TENDILLA.

Forgive my errand ;

It shames me.

PADILLA.

Pray speak on.

TENDILLA.

The Council, met

In desperate haste, have voted that you stand  
Twixt them and mercy, and require your name  
To act of resignation of your power  
As general of the army.

*[TENDILLA produces a parchment while PADILLA eagerly speaks.]*

PADILLA.

Will they take

All office from me ? Strip me of my rank ?

Cancel the bond of duty with command ?  
Dismiss me to the common herd of men  
Naked and lonely ?

TENDILLA.

It is even so.

PADILLA.

Give me the scroll.

*[He eagerly signs and returns the scroll.]*

There ! you have done your work

Briefly and well.

TENDILLA.

My office was a sad one ;

Forgive it.

PADILLA.

Forgive ! I thank you ; leave me to myself,  
But take my blessing with you.

*[Exeunt TENDILLA and OVANDO.]*

I am free—

I shall not die in vain. The Regent's offer  
Of pardons at the will of him who gives  
Padilla to the axe, shall be embraced  
This hour ; the holy father, who prays for us  
Within, shall bless my mission and array me  
In reverend semblance, which will give free passage

To Adrian's camp, to strike a noble bargain  
And to fulfil it gladly.

*Enter FLORIO.*

FLORIO.

Will you see  
My lady for a moment ?

PADILLA.

No ; not now ;  
Tell her I am busy—but quite calm—and soon—  
Yes ; very soon, shall meet her.

*[Exit FLORIO.]*

It is hard  
To leave her unembraced, yet on a moment  
Hangs the last issue. Heaven vouchsafe my son  
Life till I reach him, and I'll cast aside  
This robe of frail mortality, with joy  
More eager than, when flush'd in summer's noon  
With martial sports, I threw my vestments off  
To cleave the lucid Tagus. Youth's sweet spring  
Throbs in my veins as then ; I trample air.

*[Exit PADILLA.]*

THE LAST SCENE.—*The Tent of the Regent.—The Storm dispersing.*—ADRIAN *discovered with Officers of his staff.*

ADRIAN.

Bring forth the noblest prisoners ; they shall first  
Atone their treason.

[MONDEIAR *brought in guarded.*

Who is this ?

MONDEIAR.

My name

Is Mondeiar.

ADRIAN.

Do I, in you, behold the brother  
Of the arch-rebel's wife ?

MONDEIAR.

You see the brother  
Of an heroic lady who exults  
In the affection of the noblest soldier  
Castile has nurtured,—who, if his loyal heart  
Had not refused to listen to our prayers,  
Would have, ere this, been rebel to such end



That you had pray'd him, on your knees, to take  
From you the anointing oil. I wait my doom.

ADRIAN.

You see it; yonder hillock bounds the course  
Of your life's journey.

[ALPHONSO is brought in guarded.]

Who is this—a stripling?

Set him before me. You are very young  
To choose revolt; it may be older traitors  
Constrain'd you; if it was so, and you answer  
My questions frankly, I may show you grace.  
Who took you into battle?

ALPHONSO.

My free heart,  
Following a glorious father.

*Enter Soldier.*

SOLDIER.

My lord, a priest  
Who says that, if you grant his terms, he'll give  
Padilla to your justice, craves admission.

ADRIAN.

Admit him instantly.

ALPHONSO.

A priest so vile!

ADRIAN (*to* ALPHONSO).

Your speech is bold, but your faint heart belies it;  
You tremble and grow pale; 'tis well; there's hope  
Your stubbornness may yield.

*Enter PADILLA in the disguise of a Friar.*

ADRIAN.

Are you the priest  
Who can betray Padilla?

PADILLA.

I will place him  
Within your grasp, if you accept my terms.

ADRIAN.

Name them.

PADILLA.

First, pardon for these prisoners.

ADRIAN.

These?

Why care for them?

PADILLA.

No matter ; 'tis my will.

ALPHONSO (*recognising PADILLA's voice*).

That voice ! Do not believe this Friar's rash promise ;  
Send him away, and let your sentence fall  
At once upon my life.

PADILLA.

Peace—lest I curse you.

ADRIAN.

Be silent, boy.

PADILLA.

He'll not offend again.

ADRIAN.

I pledge my word for their release ; what else ?

PADILLA.

Your promise that Toledo shall be free  
From spoil and insult, and her sons from vengeance.

ADRIAN.

If you consign Padilla to the axe,  
The great example shall not be obscured  
By meaner acts of punishment.

PADILLA.

Enough.

Thus I resign him to you.

[PADILLA *throws off the Friar's dress.*]

ADRIAN.

'Tis himself—

My knees sink under me as if constrain'd  
To bend before him.

PADILLA.

You will keep your word?

ADRIAN.

In all things.

PADILLA.

Let me clasp my son and die.

[ALPHONSO *rushes into PADILLA's arms.*]

ALPHONSO.

Why did you rescue me?

PADILLA.

To live for Spain.

ADRIAN.

Your son! If you would speak apart, you may.

PADILLA.

I thank you; I can teach him nothing more:

He has seen his father's life ; he'll see his death ;  
He'll learn no other lesson. Let me gaze  
One moment on my glorious birth-place, clad  
In solemn beauty by the storm that yields  
Her towers to fill my vision's grasp. Toledo,  
The crown of Spain ; fortress of Christian faith,  
That from the ages of the mighty Goths,  
Hath kept thy liberties unblemish'd, take  
Fond benediction of thy dying son,  
John de Padilla,—who in death enjoys  
The sense that his last hour has served thee well,  
And, with strength of life's last rally, prays  
Duration for thy grandeurs while the rocks  
On which thou sitt'st in queenly state shall last,  
And glory for thy children while Castile  
Shall tower among the nations !

MARIA (*without*).

I am his wife—

Padilla's wife—make way.

PADILLA.

'Tis my wife's voice ;

Pray let her pass ; she will less trouble you  
Hereafter if she see me.

ADRIAN.

Let her pass ;  
She must not hold you long.

PADILLA.

Fear not ; she'll speed me.

*Enter MARIA, who embraces PADILLA.*

PADILLA.

Forgive me that I stole away to save  
Our son ; he is pardon'd.

MARIA.

At what cost ? Your life !

PADILLA.

He would have laid down his young life to add  
An hour to mine, which I have nobly used,  
Not worth the purchase of a day, to save him  
To you for many years.

MARIA.

Ay ; many years.

PADILLA.

They will appear like moments when we meet  
Beyond those sunbreaks.

MARIA.

Then you think me pardon'd ?

PADILLA.

As certainly, Maria, as I stand  
Enfolding you, and presently shall die ;  
In the serenity that fills my soul  
I recognise assurance for us both  
Of full remission.

ADRIAN (*to his Officers*).

Why was such a heart  
A traitor's ?

MONDEIAR.

Do you dare to call him traitor ?

PADILLA.

Forbear, my brother ; when in arms, 'twas meet  
To hurl such imputation back, but now  
Meek resignation to the will of Him  
Who calls me to His bar, alone should rule  
The parting throbs of life. I would not tax  
The Regent's patience further ; so, at once,  
Farewell. . . Rejoice to think that e'er yon cloud,  
That waits upon the sun, shall drink its light

Our own Joanna's little face will shine  
Direct upon her father's.

(To ADRIAN.) You'll give passage  
For these to their old home ?

MARIA.

Not there !—the joys  
Our dear abode has nurtured, crush'd on earth,  
Will have no portion in etherial realms  
Where we shall meet ; and I must henceforth breathe  
To dream of the Eternal.

PADILLA.

Think not, dearest,  
Our old delights will fail us ; no—I feel  
Upon this giddy margin of two worlds,  
That there is nothing beautiful in this  
The passion'd soul has clasp'd, but shall partake  
Its everlasting essence ; not a scent  
Of rain-drench'd flower, nor fleece of evening cloud  
Which blended with a thought that rose to Heaven  
Shall ever die ; but link'd with joy that drew  
Colour and shape from this fair world, shall shed  
Familiar sweetness through the glorious frame  
After a thousand ages.



MONDEIAR.

Will you speak  
Nothing of public import ;—of your course ?

PADILLA.

Nothing—my course is of the past—afar  
Already I survey it, as I stand  
Assoil'd from mortal strife, in hope to win  
Eternal peace. So take at once farewell.

MARIA.

Let me go with you to the end.

PADILLA.

No farther ;  
The way I see is short. Farewell for this world.

*[Exit PADILLA, guarded.]*

*[DONNA MARIA remains standing in the centre of the scene, gazing after PADILLA and supporting ALPHONSO.]*

ADRIAN.

Lead her away ; thence she will see him die.

MARIA.

Lead me away ! Think you I fear the block,  
The headsman, and the axe ? No—I behold  
A sainted hero turn those ghastly shapes  
To images of triumph ; while it lasts

These eyes shall drink his mortal greatness in ;  
Kneel down, my son, and gaze with me ; you'll see  
Nothing so beautiful on this side heaven.

[ALPHONSO falls on his knees before MARIA, but covers his face with his hands ; she stands erect fixedly gazing in the same direction.]

ALPHONSO.

Forgive me ; 'tis not possible.

MARIA.

He treads  
Lightly as on the evening when I changed  
Love's vow for his ; he lays his robe aside  
With airiest grace ; he turns his head—thank God  
I caught that look and know it met my own—  
He kneels before me ; while the sun sheds forth  
A slanting glory through the lurid clouds  
That falls upon him as a visible track  
From earth to heaven ; and now the headsman wields  
His feeble axe in air.

ALPHONSO.

It falls ? It falls ?

MARIA.

No—it has caught the sunbeam—and revolves  
Above him like a crown of glory sent

To wreathe his head. He spreads his hands ; his soul  
Breathes prayer through parted lips that keep the hue  
They wore in freshest youth.

ALPHONSO.

And now ?

MARIA.

With God.

THE END.

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